ANGLO-SIKH RELATIONS 1799—1849

A Reappraisal of the Rise and Fall of the Sikhs

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FOREWORD

Dr. Hasrat's scholarly and well-written account of Anglo-Sikh relations from 1799 when Ranjit Singh the young Sukerchakia chief occupied Lahore to the final defeat of the Sikhs nnd the annexation of the Punjah in 1849 is the most important work that has heen puhlished on the suhject since J.D. Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs* first puhlished in 1849. No previous writer on this subject has worked through the manuscript sources availahle in the Commonwealth Relations Office, the Puhlic Records Office and the British Museum in London. In addition to the contemporary manuscript sources he has consulted the private papers of Wellesley, Auckland, Ellenhorough, Broughton, Hardinge, and Dalhousie. His linguistic equipment has eoahled him to examine indigenous sources in the Persi-Arahic scripts, especially the valuable *Umadat-ut-Tawarikh* of Sohan Lal, the official Persian diary of the Sikh Darhar.

It is clear from Dr. Hasrat's hook that previous writers have over-estimated the importance of Metcalfe's missioo to Raojit Singh in 1808. At this time the Sikh leader was merely a petty chief; for, although his territories may he dignified with the title of kingdom on the ground that the last *gurmatta* or national Sikh council hod heeo held in 1805, he did oot hecome a formidahle power until some years after Metcalfe's visit. The extent of his kingdom will he realised when it is remembered that Attock was not taken until 1813, Kashmir until 1819, Dera Ghazi Khan until 1820, and Dera Ismail Khan until 1821. As late as 1824 a serious rehellion of Muslim trihes occurred in the neighhourhood of Attock, while it was not until 1834, five years hefore his death, that Peshawar passed into Sikh hands. Moreover, it was Napoleon's sacrifice of Persian interests at Tilsit, rather than Metcalfe's ahilities as a diplomat, which made possihle the treaty of 1809.

Because the growth of Sikh power was connected with the decline of the Afghan menace after the death of Ahmad Shah Durrani, the supposed French threat to India because of the presence of General Gardane at Tehran, and the growth of Russophohia in the thirties of the nineteenth century, the suhject is important, extensive and complex. Fresh light is thrown on the navigation of the Indus, Sikh policy towards the Amirs of Sind, Macnaghten's mission to Ranjit Singh, the extent to which Wade at Ludhiana influenced Auckland's interpretation of the reports of Alexander Burnes from Kahul, and to the extent to which

the Sikh army after Ranjit Singh's death passed beyond the control of the local government, and assumed a republican character It is also clear from this book that the rise of Gulab Singh was the result of intrigue and treachery towards his Sikh masters Hardinge's private papers and despatches expose him as a spy of the British Government.

Controversy exists about the Sikh Wars since Cunningham in 1846, and half a century later, Gough and Innes wrote their accounts Dr. Hasrat had, however, the advantage of consulting the private papers of the main charcters of the drama—Hardinge, Dalhousie, Gough and others His account of the Sikh wars and the Annexation is both refreshing and startling We may differ from him, when he calls the second Sikh War a *misnomer*, but the evidence which he has produced in support appears to be convincing and irrefutable

We are now in an age when the history of India is being rewritten by Indians I am proud of the fact that Dr. Hasrat produced this book while working under my supervision at Oxford.

Balliol College,
Oxford
24th February, 1962

C C DAVIES

PREFACE

Although written a few years ago, the present work could not be published owing to various reasons, one of these being the author's dissatisfaction with the original composition. As during the years 1962-66, he remained outside India on an assignment at Tribbuvan University, Nepal, the rewriting of the work in the light of fresh materials, particularly the private papers of Wellesley, Auckland, Ellenborough, Hardinge, Broughton and Dalhousie, took place rather slowly amongst his other multifarious engagements at Kathmandu. However, a redeeming feature of the delay in the publication of the work was its through revision ; the appendices originally intended to be incorporated at the end of the book had to be altogether omitted. These valuable documents on the history of the Punjab and the Sikhs, still inaccessible to scholars of Indian history—selections from the private papers of Auckland, Ellenborough, Hardinge, and Dalhousie will now be issued in a separate volume entitled : *The Punjab Papers.*

The revision of the work also led to the alteration of some of the author's earlier opinions based on materials examined in England. Thus, some of the conclusions in the later chapters (*XIII-XX*) of the work would appear somewhat in sharp contrast to the generally accepted views of the scholars of the history of the Punjab. But these are based on adequate evidence.

The narrative till the death of Ranjit Singh is based on public correspondence in the India Office and local histories, supported by the private papers of Wellesley and Auckland, both in the British Museum. It deals fully with the early British policy towards the Jumna-Sutlej region, the first British mission to Lahore and the Sikh depredations in the Doab (*Chap. III*). Ranjit Singh's refusal to assist Holkar who had entered the Punjab, led to a vaguely-worded treaty with the British in 1806, followed by a policy of strict neutrality, allowing Ranjit Singh to dominate the Malwa and Sirhind (*Chap. IV*). The Francophobia and the Metcalfe's mission leading to the treaty of Amritsar are detailed in *Chapters V* and *VI*. Two decades following the treaty of 1809 saw the extension and consolidation of Sikh power in the Punjab. Except for the adjustment of territorial disputes and exchange of complimentary missions, the years between 1809 and 1830 are devoid of any major political events (*Chap. VII*).

The prevention of Sikh advance towards Sind, the Russophobia, Auckland's folly of resuscitating Saddozai power in Afghanistan, and the exclusion of the Sikhs from any positive role in it till the end of the Afghan campaign in August 1839 are detailed in *Chapters VII-XI* The following two chapters (*XII, XIII*) deal with the period of political turmoil in the Punjab and that of 'armed truce' with the British (1840 44)

It would be observed that confusion about the early Sikh military resources arises because of the paucity of local materials and the divergent accounts of British writers—Francklin, Browne, Malcolm and others, till Ochterlony in 1809 compiled his report on the Sikh country Of the army of Ranjit Singh, however, fuller accounts are available those of the *Khalsa Darbar Records* nearly tally with Richmond's and Cunningham's estimates The most extraordinary phenomenon in Sikh history after the enthronement of Sher Singh by the Army in January 1841 is the emergence of the *Khalsa*, which became the supreme authority at Lahore The author's approach to the genesis of the transformation of the army of Ranjit Singh materially differs from the generally accepted views of both British and Indian historians (*Chap XIV*)

The history of the first Sikh War and of the Punjab Campaign of 1848-49, has been rewritten from the new materials *viz*, the original war despatches in the *Public* Records Office, London, and the private papers of Hardinge and Dalhousie In reconstructing the stirring battles of Mudki, Ferozeshah, Aliwal and Sobraon, the prevalent fallacies have been corrected, and myths exploded Thus the British preparations for a war with the Sikhs consequent upon the emergence of the Sikh army as a militant republican force, have been brought into focus, and the exaggerations regarding the number of Sikh forces employed in these battles as recorded in the official despatches of Gough and Hardinge discounted Similarly, the circumstances which led to the British invasion of the Punjab in 1848, have been re assessed and brought in line with the actual facts

The author s observations on the nature of the so called Second Sikh War and the battles of Ramnagar, Chillianwala and Gujrat are based on fresh contemporary evidence Conclusions with regard to the numbers of the rebel Sikh force and the Army of the Punjab are the result of careful examination of fresh data, particularly the *Dalhousie Papers*, which the author had the privilege of examining in Scotland, and which have also enabled him to furnish more in-

formation on the events before and after the Annexation, the escape of rani Jindan to Nepal, the deposition of Maharaja Dalip Singh and his conversion to Christianity.

Though much work is being done at the present moment on the history of the Sikhs, an accountful narrative of the ten years following the death of Ranjit Singh yet remains to be written. Much of what has appeared so far is lop-sided, erroneous, and without proper historical balance Towards this end the present writer has aimed in the later part of the work with what results, it is not for him to judge

It remains for the author to express his gratefulness to those without whose ungrudging assistance he would not have been able to complete his task He is deeply indebted to the British Council for providing finance for his two years' stay at Oxford His thanks are particularly due to the Librarian, the India Office Library (Commonwealth Relations Office, London), to the Trustees of the British Museum, London, to the Librarian Nottingham University Library, to the Keepers of Records of the Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh, the Public Records Office, London, and the Punjab Government Records Office, Lahore To the grand old man of Divinity he is deeply indebted for reading the original manuscript, and offering valuable suggestions, besides contributing a Foreword to the book

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8 August, 1968.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Auckland—*Auckland's Private Papers* in the British Museum.

BISL (I) *Bengal and India Secret Letters* in the India Office Library (Commonwealth Relations Office).

(BM) Manuscript Records in the British Museum.

BPC(I) *Bengal Political Consultations* Series of Manuscript Records in the India Office Library (C.R.O).

BSPC(I) *Bengal Secret and Political Consultations* Series of Manuscript Records in the India Office Library (C.R.O).

Broughton (BM) *Broughton Papers* in the British Museum.

C Consultation No. (always preceded by the date of Consultation).

CHP Coulston House *Dalhousie Papers*.

Dal. Mun. *Dalhousie Muniments* in the Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh.

(EP) *Ellenborough Papers* in the Public Records Office, London

HMS(I) *Home Miscellaneous Series* of Manuscript Records in the India Office Library (C.R.O).

(I) Manuscript Records in the India Office Library (C.R.O).

IPC(I) *India Political Consultations* Series of Manuscript Records in the India Office Library (C.R.O.).

ISP(I) *India Secret Proceedings* Series of Manuscript Records in the India Office Library (C.R.O).

LPD *Lahore Political Diaries* (P).

(P) Manuscript Records in the Punjab Government Records Office, Lahore.

(PP) *Parliamentary Papers*.

PRO Manuscript Records in the Public Records Office, London.

PRC *Poona Residency Correspondence*.

UT The *Umadat-ut-Tawarikh*—the Official Diary (Persian) of the Lahore Darbar.

(WD) *Wellesley Despatches* (Martin).

(WP) *Wellesley Papers*—Series II in the British Museum.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

SOURCES AND MATERIALS

1 Local histories

Gurmukhi materials for the study of the later political history of the Sikhs are scarce, on Anglo Sikh relations, they do not exist Persian being the current language for all political purposes, the Bhats—the priestly literate class among the Sikhs, were occupied more with religion than politics The rugged Misaldars were too busy fighting their petty battles, with no idea of chronicling the events of the time Consequently, Hindu *munshis* who were well conversant with Persian and wrote histories of the time in that language, received little encouragement from them

The main defect of the Persian histories of the Sikhs compiled by Hindu or Muslim chroniclers, is their religious bias The otherwise informative works of Bute Shah—the *Tārikh i-Punjab* (BM, Or 2623), Mufti—the *Ibratnama* (I, MS 504), Muhammad Naqi—the *Shersinghnāma* (I, MS 505), Khushwaqt Rai—the *Kitāb i Tawarikh i-Panjab* (BM, Or 117), Kanhaya Lal—the *Ranjitnāma* (Lahore, 1876), Bakhtmal—the *Khalsanama* (BM, Add 24,033), and Amarnath—the *Zafarnāma i Ranjit Singh* (1828), all suffer from this defect Though of considerable historical value, they furnish no positive information about the political relations of the Sikhs with the English

Of a different category is Sohan Lal's *Umadat ut Tawarikh*, the official Persian Diary of the Sikh Darbar It is a stupendous work of 7,000 pages, completed between 1812 1852, and as a record of contemporary events, based on personal observations, it does not suffer much from Court influence It is an excellent work, but a part of it dealing with the Anglo Sikh Wars, borrowed by Sir Herbert Edwardes, was never returned As a balanced chronicle, it has won the approbation of both the Sikhs and the English Murray, Wade, Prinsep, and Cunningham found it quite useful

But while Sohan Lal details minutely the official transactions at the Darbar, he either skips over or remains reticent on inconvenient

Anglo-Sikh controversies As a representative of the official Sikh point of view, he signally suffers from an inferiority complex Compared to British offiial records, his information is not only meagre hut also imaginary and grossly inaccurate It is doubtful whether Sohan Lal had access to the Lahore State Papers or the Ludhiana Agency's correspondence with the Lahore Government. He is eulogistic towards the Sikhs, profusely vituperative towards the Afghans, and not too unfriendly towards the British.

The Lahore State Papers have not survived Modern Sikh historians, however, helieve that they were destroyed during 1846-1849 hy the British. There is nothing to suhstantiate the truth of this assertion.

2 British Records

The main sources for the study of Anglo-Sikh relations, therefore, are the British public records, the secret despatches and private papers. Of these, the records of the Ludhiana Agency and Delhi Residency are important Some have been published (*vide Bib 5 (2) infra*), though in a mutilated form (LPD), while some *viz* , the *Trial of Lal Singh* (No 16), and *of Mulraj* (No. 14) are quite useful

The *Ludhiana Agency Records* were ohviously used hy Wade and Murray in their reports, which were consolidated hy Prinsep, in May 1834, for Lord William Bentinck Wade's account is sketchy though authoritative He is restrained in the discussion of contemporary political prohlems hetween the Sikhs and his government. Murray is anti-Sikh, inaccurate and replete with scandals and gossip. As an Assistant at Ludhiana, Cunningham had access to the Agency papers, which he has used in his *History of the Sikhs*. His *Narrative of the Political Conditions and Military Resources of the Punjab* in the *India Secret Proceedings* (1 28 March, 1845-Nos 55 and 66), a truthful and informative document, deserves publication Cunningham also served on Gough's Staff and was Hardinge's *aide-de-camp* during the first Anglo-Sikh War. For his candid strictures on British policy, he was dismissed from the Political Department in 1849. In March 1846, Hardinge considered him "a perfect Sikh." (*EP-PRO 30/12-21/7*). After the first Sikh War, his presence at the N. W. Frontier was deemed too dangerous (*ibid.*), which led to his transfer to Bhopal. But for his removal from Ludhiana, he would have given us the inside story of the Peace Settlement (1846-1848), and the so-called second Sikh War.

The despatches of the Ludhiana Agency and Delhi Residency (1804-1810) are all to he found in the *Bengal Secret and Political*

Consultations (1800-1834), the *India Secret Proceedings* and the *Bengal Political Consultations* in the Commonwealth Relations Office. So are the records of the Ludhiaoa Agency (1816-1840), in particular, the correspondence on the Indus aod the Sutlej Navigation; the Ludhiana Agency, its duties and functions, the territorial claims of the Lahore Government, the Aoglo-Sikh-Afghan affairs, and the various British missions to the Court of Ranjit Singh. BSPC (I) is our primary source of information oo Anglo-Sikh affairs till 1809. Additiooal information can he ohtained from a curious mixture of chronological coofusion in the India Office—the *Home Miscellaneous Series* An extremely poor selectioo of documeots, cotitled the *Poona Residency Correspondence*, fills the gap of the period prior to 1800.

Though the *Home Miscellaneous Series* is extremely sketchy and n disarray of chronology, yet it contains io detail the correspondence on Metcalfe's Mission to Lahore, Minto-Rnnjit Singh letters, and the despatches of Edmonstooe, Carey, Ochterlooy and Seton The correspondence in the *Bengal Secret and Political Consultations* is full, particularly, Lake's transactioos in the Cis-Sutlej region (1805-1806), the despatches of Wellesley on British policy towards the Sikhs, and Ochterlony's correspondeoce os Resident ot Delhi ond ns commander of the detachment odvaneing on the Sutlej (1808-1809) The goveromental despatches to the Delhi Residency (1803-1809), which are missing, and also Metcalfe's despatches which ore iocomplete in the Punjab Records, are oll to be found therein Of much interest are the weekly news-sheets (Lahore, Multan, Peshawar etc) in the BSPC (I) and ISP (I) Their information is very often inaccurate and untrustworthy, but nonetheless, their share in shaping British policy towards the State of Lahore has often been under estimated.

The information regarding the otherwise empty years (1810-1830) fades out in the BSPC (I) Correspondence relating to the territorial disputes hetween the two states is in the (P), and of complimentary and political missions, in the *Bengal Political Consultations* (*I*) From 1834 onwards, we turn to the *India Secret Proceedings, 1834-1856* (*I*) for the despatches of the N.W. Frontier Agency and full correspondence of Wade, Clerk, Richmond, Broadfoot and the Lawrences. Documents relating to Anglo Sikh-Afghan nffairs, Burnes' mission to Kahul (1837-1838), Macnaghten's mission to Lahore and the Tripartite treaty, the Sindhian tangle, the disaster in Afghanistan, aod British policy towards the State of Lahore till the annexatioo of the Punjab (1849), are all to be found io this series.

The two series of *Secret Letters Received from India and Bengal, 1778-1859,* and *1817-1857* in the India Office, supplement each other. These series are, unfortunately, not available in the Indian archival collections either at Calutta or New Delhi The first series (Vol 3 1798-1800) contains information regarding Wellesley's policy towards the Sikhs, Shah Zaman's threat and the first British mission to the Sikh country. Earlier letters detail fully Metcalfe's mission to Labore and the Anglo-Sikh treaty (1809- 15 December , 1809- 25 October) , the supposed Sikh-Maratha intrigues (1810- 26 January), Amberst Government's relations with Lahore (1824- 1 November) Other important documents included in the Enclosures to this Series are Metcalfe's Minute on British Policy towards Sind (1830 25 October), Trevelyan's Report (1831-19 November), Burnes' Geographical and Military Memoir (1831- 3 August), and Bentinck's Indus Navigation Scheme and the Rupar Meeting with Ranjit Singh (1831- 6 May) Secret Letters of the later period, deal fully with Auckland's policy towards Kabul and Labore (1838 13 August), Punjab affairs and Lahore co-operation during the first Anglo-Afghan War (1841- 22 December , 1842-19 October) Various letters of the years 1842-1844 depict fully the state of affairs at Lahore, and the supposed military anarchy in the Punjab Events leading to the first Sikh War, and details of military operations at Ferozeshah and Mudki etc. are given in the Secret Letters of 1846 (2 July, 7 August, 6 and 18 November, and 2,4 and 31 December), and those of Baddowal, Aliwal and Sobraon are described in the Secret Letters of 1846 (1,3 and 19 January , 1 and 19 February , and 19 March) Later events, *viz* , Lal Singh's administration and his eventual banishment, the Multan Revolt, the Hazara rebellion, and military operations of the invasion of the Punjab, are given in the secret letters of the years 1846-1849

Though the Secert Letters contain information of the utmost importance, yet to study them exclusive of their relevant enclosures, is highly misleading and dangerous Some of the important Secret Letters dealing with British policy before and after the Sikh Wars, have not been included in the Blue Books-XXXI, 1846 , XLI, 1847 and XLI, 1849.

Private Papers of Wellesley (BM), Auckland (BM and Broughton), Ellenborough (PRO), Hardinge (BM, Broughton and PRO), and Dalhousie (BM, Broughton , Edinburgh and Headington) give much more unreserved expression of opinion on public affairs than the official despatches

3. Wellesley Papers

It is doubtful, whether a further study of the *Wellesley Papers* (BM), would add to what is already known about the early British policy towards the Sikh country from the (WD) or Pearce's *Memoirs and Correspondence of Marquess of Wellesley* and similar printed papers A few volumes (38274-75, 37282-84, BM) deal with the period from 1797-1805. They provide interesting details, as for instance, the imaginary Afghan threat to Delhi and Oudh, and Wellesley's attempt to combine the Sikhs to stop Shah Zaman's advance to the Jumna

4 Auckland Papers

Auckland's Private Letters (BM- Add 37689-94) are quite useful, but much of what is hitherto not well known, is contained in the two volumes of his private correspondence (1835-1841) with Sir John Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control in the *Broughton Papers* (BM, 36473-74), which also include a volume (XIV) of the *Palmerston Papers* on the attitude of Russia in Persia and Afghanistan. Auckland's private correspondence throws fresh light on British policy in Afghanistan, Sind and Lahore. It shows that he was originally sceptical of the Russo-Persian threat and that he became influenced by Ellis, McNeill, Macnaghten, Burnes and Wade to accept it as a positive danger to India Various schemes to resuscitate the Saddozai power in Afghanistan (BM—36473- *fol* 369a) disclose his vacillating mind in engrafting upon Wade's proposal to restore Shah Shuja to Kabul with Sikh help, the more direct suggestion of Burnes for direct British participation in the entire enterprise (*fol* 264b) These documents clearly show that British policy in Sind was highly aggressive and inconsistent (*fol* 94b *sq.*), that the Sikhs were bribed to accept 1,500,000 rupees out of the Sindhian levy to forego their claim on Shikarpur and sign the Tripartite treaty.

The correspondence contains numerous peronal observations of Auckland on the Sikh Court, and on persons and politics at Lahore : *Ranjit Singh*—'distrustful of us being a great power and with a reputation for the reverse of moderation' (*fol* 94 b), 'possessed sagacity and shrewdness' (*fol.* 41b); but 'eyes us with friendly suspicion' (*fol.* 92b) *Kharak Singh*—'apparently witless, though reported by some to be less than in appearance' (*fol.* 360a) *Naunihal Singh*—'clever though dissipated' (*fol* 363 a) *Sher Singh*—'a cheerful, intelligent and well-bred soldier, popular with the army, but mistrusted by the Maharaja (*fol* 361 b), or again—'he is clever and bold, but he has been wild and unprincipled,

aod at present has but little influence' (*fol* 97a) *Dhian Singh*—'the observed of all observers, handsome in appearance, graceful in manners though of much reserve charged by some with schemes of high ambitions and 'far from friendly to the English' (*fol* 363b) *Dost Muhammad*—'fumes against the abandonment of Peshawar, but in the end says that he can only exist by the breath of the British Government' (*fol* 235b) *On the Sikhs*—'the Sikhs are a swaggering and restive nation proud of their military strength and there is not an officer in our army who does not avow an appetite for a Sikh war' (*fol* 209a) When Allard brought a letter from the French Emperor to Ranjit Singh—'(The French) are endeavouring to blow up a bubble of national importance in the Punjab (*fol* 197a)

That the Indian Government did not drift into the first Afghan War is evident from Auckland's report concerning the Tripartite treaty "I have been playing a game requiring a clear sighted vigor in the dark and with [my hands tied' (*fol* 526b) Sikh view of the critical position in Afghanistan is given (36474 *fol* 261), that both Clerk and Macnaghten pressed Auckland in 1840 to interfere in the Punjab (*fol* 304 444 45 450), that he snubbed them both (*fol* 452 *ff.*), but the India House seemed inclined to a war with the Sikhs (*fol* 468 b)

5 Ellenborough Papers

The *Ellenborugh Papers* in the Public Record Office London, provide materials for a fresh interpretation of British policy towards the Sikhs from the death of Ranjit Singh to 1848 Auckland's private correspondence with the President of Board of Control ends in June 1841, that of Hardinge (Broughton—36475) begins in May 1846 The intervening gap covering the most confused period in Sikh history is filled up by the *Ellenborugh Papers* particularly, *Papers relating to Indian Affairs, 1839 43* (No 25, PRO 30/12), and *1841-42* (No 8, PRO 30/12), *Papers relating to the state of Sikh Government following the death of Ranjit Singh 1838-1841* (No 30, I, part ii), *Letters from the N W Frontier Agency, January-June 1844* (No 60, PRO 30/12), and *Ellenborough's private letters to Col Richmond, the Agent at the N W F Agency*, (No 106, PRO 30/12) Of great value are *Ellenborough's private letters to the Queen and the Duke of Wellington, 1841 1844* (No 28 12, 13), and *Letters from the Duke of Wellington* (No 11) *Ellenborough's private correspodence with Henry Hardinge, 1842-1847* (No 21/7, PRO 30/12), which also contain Hardinge's letters on Punjab affairs, covering six crucial years of British policy before, during and after the first Anglo Sikh War, in my opinion, are the most valuable of the whole lot

The information supplied by these papers is quite extraordinary. Ellenborough's letters to the Duke of Wellington (PRO 30/12-28/13), and Hardinge's correspondence with Ellenborough (PRO 30/12-21/7), shows the extent of British military preparations during 1843-1846, for a war with the Sikhs The Duke's opinions on Indian military affairs, which guided the Indian Government in adopting measures for the defence of the Sutlej frontier, are in No. 12-28/13. These papers also show that the offer of Jalalabad to the Sikhs in 1842, aimed at the dispersal of their armies to enable Ellenborough to assemble the Army of Reserve on the Sutlej; that the French officers of the Lahore Government—Court, Ventura and Avitahle, supplied intelligence to the British; and that British political officers at the N.W. Frontier Agency—Richmond, Cunningham, Nicholson and Broadfoot, were involved in clandestine intrigues with the Lahore dependencies, particularly Multan and Kashmir. These papers give a complete picture of the movement of large hodies of British troops towards the Sutlej, hoth hy Ellenborough and Hardinge, and the latter's policy towards the State of Lahore, hefore and after the first Sikh War (1843-1846).

6 Hardinge's private letters

Two sets of Hardinge's private papers dealing with the Punjab affairs, the first Sikh War, and the Peace Settlement are available to us. The first is the *Hardinge-Ellenborough Correspondence, 1842-1847*, in the Public Record Office, London (PRO No 21/7) This correspondence reveals the inner story of the main causes of the Anglo-Sikh War—the so-called military anarchy at Lahore; the concentration of large British forces on the Sutlej, the British seizure of Suchet Singh's treasure, the rejection of Lahore's claim to the village Mowran, and the extraordinarily hostile conduct of Major Broadfoot, the British Agent on the N W. Frontier towards the Sikhs, particularly, the virtual seizure of the Cis-Sutlej possessions of the Lahore Government

The second set of Hardinge's private papers is in the British Museum. Included in the *Broughton Papers* (Broughton BM, Vol 36475), it contains the correspondence of Hardinge with Sir John Hohhouse, the President of Board of Control, from May 1846 to February 1848. These papers disclose clearly that Hardinge's scrupulous avoidance of annexation of the Punjab after the first Sikh War, aimed at the destruction of the Sikhs as a political and military power. They also throw fresh light on his questionable dealings with Gulab Singh regarding the sale of Kashmir, which the Whig opposition in

England assailed without ceremony (EP PRO 30/12,21/7). Hardinge discusses with extraordinary frankness the aims and objects of his "political experiment" in the Punjab, particularly, the Peace Settlement of March 1846, the second Treaty of Labore (December, 1846), which transformed the State of Lahore into a British protectorate, the expulsion of rani Jindan from Lahore (September 1847), and the decision to administer Multan directly (December, 1847)

7 Dalhousie Papers

Dalhousie's private correspondence with Hobhouse from January 1848 to March 1852 (Broughton—BM, 36476 77), exposes the failure of Hardinge's political experiment in the Punjab It also shows how the Government of India deliberately made no attempt to crush the minor revolt at Multan, which followed the murder of two British political officers on 20 April, 1848 (BM, 36476, *fol* 56a-78b) Its unjust acceptance as a general uprising of the Sikhs, led Lord Gough to propose on 30 April, the assembling of a large army for full scale operations in the Punjab (*fol* 79b) On 11 May, Dalhousie demanded a national reparation from the State of Lahore (*fol* 70a), agreeing with his military Chief (*fol* 66b), what Henry Lawrence described "a grand hunt in the cold season" The myth of the unsuitability of the season (*fol* 83a) and the scale of large military operations required to suppress the Multan revolt (*fol* 80b *ff*), was shattered by Herbert Edwardes, who defeated Mulraj at Kaneyree on 18 June (*fol* 113 *sq*), and, but for the calculated inaction of the Government of India (*fol* 117b *sq*), would have reduced the citadel of Multan

Dalhousie's private correspondence with Hobhouse proves beyond doubt that he allowed the Multan rebellion to spread for 5 months, refused any help to Edwardes, and linking up the isolated Hazara rising in the north west with the Multan revolt (*fol* 226a *ff*) indicted the Sikhs for a general conspiracy against the British (*fol* 251b *sq*) The justification of his inaction to the Home Government (Broughton, *ibid*, *fol* 79a 83b), proceeded side by side with full-scale military preparations for an invasion of the Punjab, which were set on foot in May, 1848 (*ibid fol* 95 *ff*, 121 *sq*), and in August, the Board was informed of the absolute necessity of the annexation of the Punjab (*ibid fol* 186b-215b)

The so called second Anglo Sikh War was fought and precariously won without formal declaration (*ibid fol* 275b), and the Punjab was annexed (29 March, 1849) without any positive instructions from

the Home Government (*ibid. fol.* 498a). While Hardinge's correspondence shows the annexation of the Puajab in 1846 as politically premature, financially doubtful and militarily eumbersome (EP-PRO-30/12,21/7), for reasons just to tbe eontrary, Dalhousie in 1848 justified to the Board its ahsolute necessity. Controversy regarding Dalhousie's poliey of annexation is detailed in full in these papers. The Whigs, wbo two yeats earlier (1846) had hacked both Ripon and Peel for its non-adoption, seemed disinclined to accept such a drastie step when in power. The Board of Control nlso followed a eourse of drift and hesitation in giving support to Dalhousie. Dalhousie boldly forestalled them both without any positive direetions and foreed them ultimately to acquiesce to the annexation of the Punjab as a *fait accompli.*

The main collection of the *Dalhousie Papers*, more appropriately called the *Dolhousie Muniments* including the Marquis' *Diaries*, which yield much more positive information on Punjab affairs, is now the property of the Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh. The private papers of Currie, which include some of the correspondenee of Dalhousie and others, have since been published (Patiala-Amritsar, 1955). These deal with the events leading to the so-called second Sikh War nnd the nnnexation of the Punjab, but contain information of little value.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

8. Non-interference beyond the Jumna

The growth of a sovereign Sikh State in the Punjab, was the direct result of the decline of the Durrani power in north India, and the weakness of the Manjha and Malwa confederacies in the closing decades of the 18th century. British non-interfereaco in the country beyond the Jumna between 1803 and 1804, allowed Ranjit Singh to extend his authority over the Malwa and Sirhind Sikhs. But for the British nssumption of paramountey over the Cis-Sutlej states in 1809, the extension of Ranjit Singh's authority to the banks of the Jumna would have been a logical sequence to Sikh nmbition.

It seems strange that Wellesley's extension of the Company's frontiers stopped at the Jumna. There were, however, many reasons prompting him to do so. In the first plaee, the eountry beyond that river was infested by hands of warlike Sikhs, who were far from friendly to the British during the struggle with the Marathas (1803) and the Doab disturbances (1804-5). Seeondly, in the impending

struggle with Holkar and the raja of Bharatpur, the Sikhs were not considered to he reliable allies For these reasons, Wellesley did not accept the suggestions of the Delhi Residency in 1804 to annex the whole country upto the banks of the Sutlej, or to subject the whole body of the Cis Sutlej Sikhs to a tribute[1] Wellesley's public despatches establish beyond doubt that so far as the country beyond the Jumna was concerned, after the disappearance of the imaginary Afghan threat in 1798 no British interference was considered politic in the region[2]

Adherence to these general principles, which are clumsily outlined in the Lumsden's Minute of 1805, therefore, restricted Lake's negotiations with the Cis-Sutlej chiefs, when he advanced with his armies in pursuit of Holkar to the banks of the Beas late in that year A clash with the British, which would have inevitably brought them to the Sutlej, was averted by Ranjit Singh's shrewd refusal to join hands with the Maratha refugee It is clear that Ranjit Singh fully realised the military power of the British in 1805, as he did in 1809, and in his future relations with them, these considerations prompted him to retain British friendship till his death in 1839

9 Francophobia and Metcalfe s Mission

Public correspondence dealing with the French menace to India in 1807 8, which ultimately resulted in the British advance to the Sutlej, shows that it was based on flimsy and imaginary reports, and was magnified by Malcolm's despatches to the Government of India[3] The susceptibility of the Home Government,[4] and of the Indian Government,[5] seems almost incredible Ranjit Singh gave no credence to it,[6] and found it a convenient handle to gain British recognition of his claim of paramountcy over all the Sikhs[7]

Metcalfe was surprised to witness the military power of Ranjit Singh in 1808[8] The realisation that he had become the

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1 Ochterlony to Wellesley 7 December 1804 BSPC (I) 31 January 1805 C 230

2 BSPC (I) C 243

3 *Ib d* Vol 208 Nos. 1-12 16 26 and 35

4 HMS (I) Vol 511 No 80

5 Metcalfe No. 23- BSPC (I) 24 October 1808 C9

6 BSPC (I) 20 June 1808. C3-Enclosures

7 BSPC (I) 31 October 1808 C2

8 Metcalfe No 13 BSPC (I) October 1808 C20

virtual overlord of the Jumoa-Sutlej regioo, aod that oo state within that regioo could resist his arms,[1] made it appareot that nothing hut force would make him yield to the British demands. At the same time, Ranjit Singh realised the necessity of maintaioing peace with the British. Though willing to let a British army march through the Puojah to the Indus,[2] he opeoly thwarted British political coooectioo with the Afghans.[3]

Metcalfe's negotiatioos during 1808-9, exhihit Raojit Singh's virulent resistance to British intrusion into the Sikh couotry. The Sikh ruler's suspicions were unnecessarily acceotuated hy the British envoy's concealment of the ohjects of the missioo, and his intrigues with the Maharaja's mother-in-law and several Sikh chiefs.[4] Ranjit Singh's third Malwa campaigo seems, more or less, an attempt to forestall the British domioatioo of the Cis-Sutlej regioo.

Metcalfe's despatches from Lahore, therefore, exercised n decisive iofloence io effectiog a reversal of British policy towards the Sikhs late in 1808. The disoppearaoce of the Freoch threat led to ao extraordioary traosformation of Metcalfe's mission. Iostead of entering ioto a defensive alliaoce with Raojit Singh, it drifted into a political arraogemeot against him with the Malwa aod Sirhiod sardars. Its most important effect was o permaoent cleavage hetweeo the Manjha aod Malwa Sikhs, and the preveotioo of their uoificatioo into a new commonwealth of the *Khalsa*, domioated hy Lahore. British protection afforded to the Cis-Sutlej states io 1809, saved them from extinction. The Anglo-Sikh treaty of 1809 halted Ranjit Singh at the Sutlej, and advanced the Company's political frontiers to that river, hut, it also hrought the Sikhs and the English into a frieodly alliance which lasted over 36 years.

Incideotly, Metcalfe's despatches contain the earliest first-hand reports oo the character and resources of the Sikhs.

10. Extension of Sikh power

The lull in Anglo-Sikh relations hetween 1809 and 1830, was the result of British and Sikh pre-occupations elsewhere. British

1. *Ibid.* No. 23 and 35-BSPC (I) 24 October and 28 November, 1808, C64 and 4.
2. *Ibid.* No. 16.
3. *Ibid.* No. 23, 25 and 26.
4. *Ibid.* No. 16 and 23.

operations against the Nepalese (1814-16), the Pindaris (1817), the liquidation of the Maratha confederacy (1818), the subjugation of the Rajputs and the first Burmese War (1824-26), gave Ranjit Singh a free hand to conquer Multan, Attock, Kashmir, the Derajat and other Afghan possessions in the north-west of India. The consolidation of British power in northern India was, therefore, simultaneous with the extension of Sikh power in the Punjab and beyond the Indus.

It was not until the thirties that the British began to take an interest in the politics of Sind, Bahawalpur, and Afghanistan The British occupation of Cutch in 1819 had made Anglo-Sikh frontiers contiguous in Sind A decade of gradual Sikh advance towards the borders of Sind coincided with an imaginary Russo-Persian menace Bentinck's meeting with Ranjit Singh in October 1831 was, therefore, a turning point in Anglo-Sikh relations The proposals for the navigation of the Indus, which followed it, were aimed at the exclusion of Sikh power from Sind and the formation of British political relations with the states on the Indus. The Sikhs were never impressed with the commercial utility of the scheme, and feared that it would be extended to the Punjab rivers, leading ultimately to an abrogation of the treaty of 1809 An apparent incongruity in British policy in the early and middle thirties, which made Sind of great political importance, seems to have been the belief that a Russo-Persian threat would materialise from that direction This, perhaps, is explainable The Sikhs were strongly entrenched in the Punjab, and in the north-west. Between the Sutlej and Afghanistan, Sind was, therefore, the best place for the establishment of British political influence.

The success of British diplomacy, which forced the Sikhs to abandon their claims on Shikarpur and Sind, and prevented the Talpurian states from being absorbed into the Lahore dominions was, to a certain extent, the result of Wade's personal influence with Ranjit Singh. But political pressure had fostered bitterness in the mind of the Sikh ruler A sense of guilt in Sind, therefore, made Auckland unduly placate the Sikhs at the cost of the Afghans in 1839

11. Early Sikh military resources

The transformation of Sikhism into a military sect in the 16th and 17th centuries was the result of Mughal persecutions and Afghan invasions. Political and geographical factors turned it into a theocratic

military confederacy—the *Dal Khalsa,* which became a dominant force in the Punjab in the middle of the 18th century. The East India Company was ignorant of the military resources of the *Dal Khalsa,* but in 1784 Warren Hastings realised their potential strength if they were united under a powerful ruler. Early estimates of the armies of the Misals seem to be exaggerated. Foster estimated them in 1783 at 200,000-300,000 ;[1] Francklin—250,000 in 1788 ;[2] and Browne—98,000 in 1788.[3] The English adventurer George Thomas, who fought the Phulkian Sikhs in 1799-80, estimated their armies at 65,000.[4]

Among the later notices on the combined strength of the Sikh Misals, both Malwa and Sirhind, are those of Malcolm in 1805.[5] Ochterlony's reports place them at 10,400 in 1804,[6] and 12,850 in 1809[7]. White who surveyed the country in 1809, estimated them at 24,959.[8] Prinsep's account, based on the earlier reports of Murray and Wade, places the strength of the Misal armies at 58,700. This includes the army of the Sukerchakias as 2,500 and that of their Kanhaya allies as 8,000.[9]

Evidence that the steady growth of the Sikh army after 1809 was the direct result of the proximity of an imperialist neighbour, is singularly lacking.[10] Its development was a political and geographical necessity both for the Sikh schemes of conquest and for their resistance to the Afghans on the N.W. frontier. Since British political interests did not come into clash with Sikh expansion in that direction, Sikh militarism was never regarded as a challenge to British power. On the

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1. *Travels,* i, p. 353.
2. *Shah Alam,* p. 75. *ff.*
3. *India Tracts,* ii.
4. *Military Memoirs of George Thomas,* p. 274.
5. *Sketch of the Sikhs,* p. 150 *sq.*
6. BSPC (I) 31 January, 1805. C 236.
7. *Ibid.,* 29 July, 1809. C 3-4.
8. (P) 6 : 50 ; 2 : 148.
9. *The Origin of the Sikh Power* etc., p. 186.
10. Kohli's account of the Army of Ranjit Singh (*Journal of Indian History,* Feb., Sept. 1922), based on the *Khalsa Darbar Records* is, by far, the most authoritative. It shows that the regular Khalsa army expanded from 4,061 men and 131 guns in 1811 to 35,242 men and 468 guns in 1838 ; and doubled itself during the period 1838-1845 to 70,721 men and 676 guns. Ellenborough's mission to Lahore in 1843 miscalculated it at 65,000 men and 200 guns. (EP-PRO 30/12, 28/12, *fol.* 72 *ff.*). Richmond's official despatches estimated it at 78,000 men and 655 guns, which nearly tallies with the *Khalsa Darbar Records.*

contrary, Ranjit Singh was permitted to import arms through British territory, at times, these were supplied to him from the Company's arsenals The introduction of European discipline into the Sikh army excited British comment, but generally, the Sikhs under Ranjit Singh, although they were considered formidable in their military strength, were regarded as friendly towards the British

12 The *Firangi* officers

Incidently, the presence of forty-six "*Firangi*" officers, who partly remodelled the Sikh regular infantry and artillery battalions on European lines, was regarded with suspicion. These European Sardars of the Sikh government—Allard, Ventura, Court, Harlan, Homberger and others, formed a part of Lahore Court nobility, and heartily engaged themselves in local politics and intrigue. Their influence at the Darbar, excited the jealousy of the local Sardars It also aroused British suspicions[1] The value of the introduction of European methods and discipline in the Sikh armies by these European adventurers, however, seems to be over-stressed, and needs to be properly assessed Sikh aversion to all foreigners after Ranjit Singh's death, drove them out of the Punjab,[2] and the remaining few, finding it difficult to maintain their position, sought British intercession and supplied information to the British political officers at the N W. Frontier Ageney.[3]

13 Under estimation of Sikh power

The power of the colossal military machine, which Ranjit Singh had built up in 30 years of British friendship, was under-estimated both by English travellers in the Punjab and the Ludhiana Ageney officials Discussions as to the qualities of the Sikhs as fighters against the Marathas, the Rajputs and the Afghans, and criticisms of Ranjit Singh's crude military administrative structure are plentiful in the despatches of Ochterlony, Wade, Burnes, Lawrence, Osborne, Clerk,

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1 Numerous instances of the activities of the French officers at the Court, excited comment at Ludhiana Calcutta and London As for instance, Allard, who on his return from France in 1837, brought a letter from Louis Philippe to Ranjit Singh, produced a remoustrance from Lord Grenville to the French Minister in London Auckland's protest to Ranjit Singh against the undue influence of French adventurers at Lahore produced from the Maharaja an assurance that it would be checked (*vide* Broughton—(BM) 36473 *fol* 197a *ff*)

2. *Vide*, generally, IPS(I) 8 February, 1841. Nos 87, 90 and 95

3 *Vide* (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/12) also ISP(I) 23 March, 1844 Nos 490 and 492 (Court and Ventura) For Avitable's correspondence, see ISP(I)—14 June, 1841 No 83

Richmond, Broadfoot and others And yet, except for vague generalisations till late 1843, when it became imperative that such information should be collected,[1] no exact statistics of the strength of the Sikh army, its dispositions and military resources, seem to be available to the British The exclusion of all foreigners from Lahore territories prevented such information being made available Furthermore, friendly relations during 1809-1839 between the two states, probably, did not justify its necessity This explanation further supports the view, that the existence of the formidable Khalsa army during this period was not regarded as a challenge to British power south of the Sutlej, but a strong barrier against the entry of the Afghans into India Hardinge described it as an effective advance-guard between the Sutlej and the Indus [2]

14 Basis of tripartite treaty

Auckland's private papers[3] disclose that the British recognition of the Sikh Afghan agreement of 1833, as a basis of the Tripartite treaty, was a blind to gain Ranjit Singh's concurrence to the scheme. There is no evidence to show that Ranjit Singh was forced to join the enterprise [4] At any rate, it is extremely doubtful whether Auckland would have proceeded with the restoration of Shah Shuja without Ranjit Singh's willingness to co-operate. Ranjit Singh was kept in ignorance of Burnes' negotiations at Kabul Shah Shuja was also uninformed of British schemes for his restoration until Macnaghten had signed the treaty with Ranjit Singh (June 1838) And the Home Government was kept in dark until August 1838, as to what part the Government of India would play in the venture

The most extraordinary aspect of the whole affair is that before Macnaghten had discussed the plan with Ranjit Singh, Auckland had decided not to employ the Sikhs in the enterprise This is established from his private enclosures,[5] and his instructions to Wade at Peshawar [6] The worst part of the arrangement of June 1838, apart from the appeasement of Sikhs at the cost of the Afghans, was

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1 ISP(I) 23 March 1844 Nos 557 58
2 Broughton Papers—(BM) 36475 *fol* 169a
3 *Ibid* 36473 74
4 *Ibid* 36473 Cunningham p 220
5 Broughton (BM)—36473 *fol* 375a *ff*
6 ISP(I) 17 July 1839 No 38

Macnaghten's proposal to make the Shah a tributary of the Sikhs[1] The imposion of a levy of 2 000 000 rupees on the Sindhian Amirs, which Auckland tried to justify to the Home Government[2] was, in fact, a high banded robbery to placate the Sikhs

The general belief that the Sikhs were forced to join in the whole transaction cannot, therefore, be accepted Auckland was misled into the belief of Shah Shuja's popularity in Afghanistan by Wade and Macnaghten, Fane s report convinced him of the military power of the Sikhs, but it was Burnes, who was chiefly responsible for British military participation in the restoration of Shah Shuja The Government of India therefore, did not drift into the first Afghan War

Sir Henry Fane, the British Commander in Chief, who visited Lahore in March 1837, was the first official to realise the military strength of the Sikhs[3] Auckland, who met Ranjit Singh in December 1838 returned highly impressed with it[4] From this time onwards, Auckland was distrustful of the Sikh power, and this regulated his and Ellenborough s conduct towards the Sikhs throughout the Afghan operations

Disaster in Afghanistan in 1841, exposed the weakness of the British position on the Sutlej—"the Company's weakest frontier' In 1842, large British armies came into contact with the hostile soldiery in the Punjab The reports of British commanders—Wade, Ferris, Wild, Macgregor, and Pollock from the N W Frontier, and of Clerk from Lahore, effected a modification in British views regarding the militant Sikhs across the border During the period of military operations in Afghanistan, despatches from home also exhibit the anxiety of the Home Government Military anarchy at Lahore, and the weakness of the Sikh Government were sufficient inducements for attending to the defence of the Sutlej frontier Ellenborough was sorely tempted to interfere in the Punjab in 1842, but it was generally believed at the India House, that British military weakness on the frontier did not justify such interference The despatches of the Duke of Wellington on Indian military affairs in 1842-43, are the basis of the Indian

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1 *Ibid* 17 October 1838 No. 144
2. Auckland 9 February 1839 Broughton (BM) 36473 *fol* 424b.
3. Broughton (BM) *op cit fol* 138b-142b
4 *Ibid fol* 361a 411b *sq*

Government's policy, which led to the strengthening of its position on the Sutlej[1] Strangely enough, a British advance to the West was not visualised by the Duke, who recommended the maintenance of the Sikh Government and advised instead the occupation of the hills—"towards the sources of the rivers by which the Punjab is watered and defended, that is to say Kashmir"[2] At the same time, measures suggested were the strengthening of the outposts of Ludhiana, Ambala and Ferozepur where a small fort was to be constructed The hill cantonments of Simla, Sabathu and Kasauli were to be reinforced and communications from Allahabad and Agra to the Sutlej were to be secured An Army of Reserve was to be assembled on that river for both defensive and offensive action

It must not be forgotten, however, that the political confusion in the Punjab and the ascendency of the Army at Lahore in 1842, had made it apparent that the militant spirit of the Sikhs would ultimately come into clash with British power There seems to be no other explanation of the subsequent measures taken by the Government of India The sudden termination of the Tripartite treaty in 1842, the offer of Jalalabad to the Sikhs and the assemblage of the Army of Reserve, are all connected events of British policy towards their Sikh allies

15 Transformation of Sikh Army

An amazing phenomenon is the transformation of the Sikh Army into the executive sovereign of the State of Lahore Except for a positive menace to the British power, the officials on the N W Frontier failed to realise its crude democratic impulse and dubbed it as "a successful mutiny" This militant nationalism of the Sikhs, which fed itself on an aversion to foreign interference in the Punjab, did not come into conflict with British operations in Afghanistan A further miscalculation was the under-estimation of the fighting power of the Khalsa soldiery—a fact which proved expensive to the British in the first Sikh War

16 British Military Preparations

The general belief that the Sikhs goaded the British into a war with them, should be dispelled The *Ellenborough Papers*

1 (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/13)—B 56g *ff*

2 Wellington to Lord Fitzgerald 6 April 1842—(EP)PRO 30/12, (28/13) No B 59

(*PRO 30/12*) establish beyond doubt that the possibilities of a military occupation of the Punjab were discussed by the Governor-General with the Home Government in October 1843.[1] But for the general condition of the Indian Army after 5 years' war in Afghanistan, and the weak military position on the N. W. Frontier it is certain that a major military operation beyond the Sutlej would have been undertaken. Non-interference as the only alternative, allowed time to the rival court-factions to weaken each other, and to the Government of India, to collect means to destroy the power of the Sikhs The N. W. F. Agency despatches[2] indicate that detailed intelligence sheets regarding the strength and dispositions of the Sikh army began to be prepared 23 months before the first Sikh War Ellenborough's military advisers estimated that British military preparations for a defensive and offensive war with the Sikhs could not be completed till November 1845.[3]

War with the Sikhs had, therefore, become inevitable The political conditions at Lahore, and the rise of the Sikh Army as virtual successor to Ranjit Singh, made it clear to Ellenborough early in 1844, that "a state of armed truce" existed between the British and the Sikhs, and that vigilant and unostentatious preparations should be set on foot[4] In May 1844, these measures were well under way. Exclusive of hill cantonments, 11,000 men and 48 guns were collected at the frontier outposts[5] Army Movement Lists in (EP) give an idea of the steady movement of British troops towards the Sutlej[6]

Hardinge was unnecessarily blamed by the Home Government for inadequate military prepartions for the first Sikh War. He had assembled 45,500 men and 98 guns, besides a river flotilla of 60 armed 3-ton boats to bridge the Sutlej, before the Sikhs crossed that river on 11 December, 1845. The virulence of the Khalsa soldiery surprised British statesmen, who had been influenced by Clerk's and Richmond's estimates of the poor quality of the Khalsa army.

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1 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/12), *fol* 106 *ff.*
2 ISP(I) 23 March and 27 April, 1844 Nos 577 58 and 180-81
3 (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/12), *fol* 128a *ff*
4 Secret Letter 11 February, 1844- BISL(I) Vol 29, paras 8–9,
5 (EP) PRO, *op c t* , *fol.* 140 *ff.*
6. *Ibid* (2o/7)

17 Deal with Gulab Singh

An inconsistency in British policy during 1844, when military preparations were being intensified, was the hope that the Punjab would be split up into two halves The possibility of the separation of the Jammu hills from the State of Lahore, as a means of weakening the power of the Sikhs, was hinted at by General Ventura of the Lahore army[1] Ellenborough toyed with the idea,[2] but Hardinge made it a positive instrument of British policy to weaken the Sikhs both before and after the first Sikh War[3] To achieve this Gulab Singh had appeared to both of them as a willing tool

As the most powerful vassal subject of Lahore, Gulab Singh was also the most dangerous enemy of the Sikh State Clerk's and Richmond's exaggerated surmises about his military strength had unduly magnified his importance It is certain that if he had attempted to accept Ellenborough's offer of Jalalabad in 1842, the Sikh armies would have destroyed him, as they nearly did in April 1845 Though the British listened to his overtures, it is doubtful whether they would have allowed him to become the master of the Punjab No open support could be given to him in carving out an independent Rajput state in the Jammu hills, yet, the idea attracted Hardinge, and ultimately led to the transfer of Kashmir to him

Gulab Singh's rise to power is a tale of intrigue, cunning and treachery towards the Sikhs In 1843, he marched on Lahore with his hillmen, and incited Peshawara Singh to revolt He had misappropriated the revenues due to the Lahore Government, and had usurped half of the tributary hill states of the Sikhs Since 1836, he had been attempting to seize Kashmir[4] Though his ambitions towards the Chinese Tartary had made the British suspicious, yet, as a disruptive force counterbalancing the Sikh army, his activities were highly welcome His numerous overtures to the British to destroy the Sikhs,[5] received no positive

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1 ISP(I) 23 March 1844 No 492 (Enclosure)

2 To the Duke of Wellington—(EP) PRO 30/12 (28/11)

3 Hardinge Broughton(BM)36475 *fol* 43a to Ellenborough 9 March and 20 April 1846—(EP) *op cit*, (21/7)

4 (EP) PRO 30/12 (60)

5 ISP(I) 13 July, 1844, No 126 4 April 1845 No 112 25 October, 1845, No 46.

respoose, for the ohvious reason, tbat withholding of support was considered to ultimately weaken both the Dogras and the Sikhs [1]

The crowning act of Gulab Singh's treachery was the transmission of military intelligence to Brigadier Wheeler at Ludhiana, just before the first Sikh War Hardioge's private papers show him as a spy of the British Governmeot As a minister of the Lahore Government, he urged the Governor-General to destory the Sikh Army, and to dispose of the minor Maharaja Dalip Singh [2]

Hardinge's deal witb Gulab Singh regarding the sale of Kashmir was shady It excited the Whig criticism at home But Gulah Singh's weakness became apparent when his hill levies failed to occupy tbe province [3]

There is no positive evidence that the Sikhs lost the first war because of the treachery of their commanders How far Hardinge's refusal to annex the Punjah in 1846 was based on sound political, financial or military considerations, is a questton whieh needs further investigation Tbe Darbar and the Sikh Army were too demoralised to oppose it In England Peel, Ripon, Hogg and Ellenhorough favonred it [4] Hardinge's private papers, however, indicate that he was afraid of repeating tbe the unsavoury experience in Sind in 1843,[5] and the events leading to Lord Ellenborough's recall in 1844 were still fresh io his mind At the same time, the policy adopted hy Hardinge in 1846 had as its ohject, the distruction of the Sikh military and political power, leading ultimately to the aonexation of the Punjab It is, however, clear from subsequent developments that the policy was hased on calculated suhterfuge—this is evidenced from the ruse played oo the Darhar for continued military occupation of Lahore, events connected with the Second Treaty of Lahore, the expulsion of

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1 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

2 Secret Letter 19 February 1846—BISL(I) Hardinge s private opinion about Gulab Singh whom he calls a geographical ally and a greatest rascal in Asia is expressed in the sardonic admittance I must forget he is a rascal and treat him better than he deserves —To Lady Hardinge, 2 March 1846—*Hardinge Papers* (Penshurst Kent)

3 Broughton (BM)—36475 fol 170a

4 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

5 *Ibid*

rani Jindan and the acceptance of Mulraj's resignation. Hardinge signally lacked political vision be ignored Henry Lawrence's warnings, and failed to realise the full impact of the national humiliation and defeat inflicted by him on the Sikhs The Multan revolt of 1848 exposed the weakness of Hardinge's political experiment in the Punjab.

18 The Punjab Campaign

The Punjab Campaign of 1848 49 opened under false colours This narrative records the events leading to it It amounted to a surreptitious invasion of the Punjab by the *de facto* rulers of the Punjab and the protectors of the young Maharaja, in direct contravention of the political and moral obligations imposed upon them by the treaties of Lahore and Bhyrowal *Deceptive in appearance* and *illogical in* political sequence, it was an undeclared war, with British armies crossing the Sutlej to give battle to the rebels on behalf of Maharaja Dalip Singh At the most it was an illegal campaign to end a rebellion To designate it as the second Anglo-Sikh War, as is usually done, is therefore a *misnomer*.

There has been much controversy regarding the reasons underlying Lord Dalhousie's annexation of the Punjab in 1849, but, it is obvious that this was the logical conclusion of British policy towards the Sikhs

CHAPTER II

RISE OF RANJIT SINGH, 1792–1800

1 Early Life

When in 1792, Mahan Singh, the chief of the Sukerchakia Misal died at the early age of 27, he left to his only son Ranjit Singh, a small kingdom in the Rechna and Chaj Doabs of the Punjab which included Gujranwala, Wazirabad and some areas in Sialkot Rohtas and Pind Dadan Khan[1] Ranjit Singh was 12 at the time, and a spoilt child of his ambitious though irresolute mother, Raj Kaur, a daughter of the Jind branch of the Phulkian family He had received little education and was almost illiterate[2] Fortunately, his father had trained him in the martial traditions set up by Charat Singh, the founder of the Misal, who had welded into a political unit, the insignificant but rugged jats of Sukerchak

Mahan Singh was an astute alliance maker, both political and matrimonial He was also an ambitious man By adroit political alliances and a warlike spirit, he had risen to power in the Punjab and to his son he had imparted military training He had often taken the young boy with him on his military expeditions While the doting mother had allowed him to indulge in every kind of youthful excess, the vigilant father took care that he should not grow up a dissolute weakling Ranjit Singh was, therefore, a brave soldier But in the *zanaiwas* (palace) he delighted in orgies

In 1786 Mahan Singh had arranged the marriage of his 6 years' old son with a daughter of the powerful Kanhaya Misal The alliance proved very fortunate, and the Sukerchakia Kanhaya combination brought about a political transformation in the Punjab The affairs of the latter confederacy, a few years later, fell into the hands of Ranjit Singh's mother-in-law, Sada Kaur, who is

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1 UT ii p 28 gives the correct date of Mahan S ngh s death Wade s (1787) does not tally with that of the Lahore Diarist (1792) Both Murray (*vide* Prinsep p 49) and Cunningham (p 119), however confirm Sohan Lal s account, which is correct

2 *Punjab States Gazetteers* XVIIA, p 215

described as 'one of the most artful and ambitious of her sex that ever figured in Sikh history'[1] With her help, Ranjit Singh took possession of both Lahore and Amritsar and thus climbed to political supremacy in the Punjab[2]

2 Rise of Sikh Confederacies

Towards the close of the eighteenth century, the Punjab, the land of five rivers, was in a chaotic condition It had suffered from repeated Durrani invasions since 1747, when Ahmad Shah had driven the Mugal governor from Lahore The fertility of the northern Mughal province had so sharpened the Afghan lust for plunder and wealth that between the years 1747 and 1767, Ahmad Shah repeated his invasions seven times, altering the whole political structure of the Indus-Jumna region But since his death in 1773, the Afghans, who had detached from the Mughal Empire, some of its richest provinces—the Punjab, Sirhind, Peshawar, Multan, Kashmir and Sind, found it extremely difficult to maintain their authority in northern India The nominal Afghan rule soon proved a disintegrating force; in the heart of the Punjab, particularly, in the Manjha and Malwa regions, it gave an impetus to the rise of Sikh Misals

The rise of the Sikh confederacies was, therefore, the direct result of the collapse of Afghan power in northern India The need to protect the Punjab from further Afghan invasions and the desire to make it independent of Mughal control led to the growth of Sikh power in the Punjab In the centre and the north, the *Bhangis* had become predominant They held the two major cities of the Punjab—Lahore and Amritsar, and extended their territories between the Jehlum and the Indus The *Ramgarhias* held the Jullundur Doab, and their possessions included Kalanaur, Qadian and Dinanagar The *Kanhayas* established their supremacy over the Raikri tract including Hajipur, Mukerian, Pathankot and Gurdaspur The *Singhpurias* held sway in the area in the

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1 Latif *History of the Punjab* Calcutta 1891, p 346

2 For Ranjit Singh's early life the authoritative accounts are Payne—*A Short History of the Sikhs* Latif—*History of the Punjab* Griffin—*Ranjit Singh* Cunningham—*History of the Sikhs* Smyth—*A History of the Reigning Family of Lahore* Prinsep—*Origin of the Sikh Power etc* The Official account of the Darbar is by Sohan Lal—entitled the *Umadat ut Tawārikh* Other Persian works *viz* Bute Shah's *Tawārikh i Punjab*, Kanhaya Lal's *Ranjit Singh Nama* etc add little to our information

east and the west of the river Sutlej The *Ahluwalias* had seized Raikot and Kapurthala, and the *Sukerchakias* had acquired Gujranwala, Wazirabad and some areas in Sialkot, Rohtas and Pind Dadan Khan

In the Cis-Sutlej region, the *Phulkian* Misal had carved out petty kingdoms in Malwa and Sirhind The Jullundur Doab was completely in the hands of the Sikh chiefs In Hariana, the Sikhs had overthrown Muslim authority and its wastelands now provided a refuge for outcastes and adventurers In the Kangra hills, the Katochs, firmly estahlished cast covetous eyes on the fertile lands of the Doah

3 End of Durrani Empire

If the Sikh confederacies had built up their petty states on the ruins of Ahdali's Indian Empire, the Muslim governors of the Durranis followed suit and threw off the Afghan yoke In the north, Attock was usurped hy the Wazirkhels ; Peshawar by the Barakzais and Jhang hy the Sials In the south, the Saddozais hecame tbe virtual rulers of Multan The Pathans, in the south east took possession of Kasur The Derajat and Bahawalpur hecame independent under tbe Daudpotas Further south in Sind, the Kalhoras, for a while, nckowledged Afghan suzerainty ; hut the Talpurians, who soon supplanted them, divided the province into three independent states of Hyderabad, Khairpur and Mirpur

The futile attempts of Taimur Shah (1773-1793), Ahmad Shah's successor, to establish his anthority in the Punjah, Sind, Multan and Kashmir, exhihited to the Sikh and Muslim usurpers, the weakness of the Afghan power During his 20 years' rule, the Durrani possessions in northern India slipped out of Afghan control ' The Sikh confederacies now fully grown up, consolidated their possessions and seized new territories Common interests and need for a concerted action against the foreign invader hound them together as a Sikh Commonwealth (*Khalsa*) A vague and loose sort of a Sikh National Diet (*Gurmatta*) hegan to advise them on all political matters

4 Weakness of Misal System

The Misal system was thus founded on a common faith and a common political need In time of emergency, the numerous small levies of the Sikh chiefs, who were otherwise

independent, might combine and act in union Though the threat of foreign aggression kept it alive, yet, as a political system it possessed no inherent strength It lacked any permanent cohesive force and was highly imperfect and irregular in its composition But for a rudimentary make belief of justice called *gaha* or self-redress, it offered to its members, who derived their revenues from a levy of *rakhi* or protection cess, war-booty and plunder, no sounder principles of administration or conquest The system worked well so long as there were territories to conquer or spoils to share, without them, it fell to pieces Neither the *Gurmatta* nor the *Sarbat Khalsa*, a general assembly of the Sikhs, could hold it together

Early in 1793, when Shah Zaman tried to play the role of his ambitious grandfather Ahmad Shah, the Sikh confederacies lacked unity Individually, they had increased their power, but the ideal of the *Khalsa* had degenerated into lust for personal ambition The *Gurmatta* had become inert and its deliberations devoted to mutual recrimination. The Misaldars still regarded the Mughals and the Afghans as their enemies, but in the absence of a binding force, they had begun preying upon the territories of each other The wrangling for personal aggrandizement had reduced the ideal of a Sikh commonwealth to a mockery The Misal system had become decayed and lifeless

5 Invasions of Shah Zaman

But if in the closing decades of the eighteenth country the Sikhs lacked political unity, the Afghan invader possessed neither the imagination nor the strength to recapture the Durrani possessions in India In the history of northern India, Shah Zaman appears as a vainglorious visionary, whose repeated invasions in 1795, 1796 and 1798 were frustrated by timely rebellions at home The Muslim rabble in the Punjab hailed him as a deliverer from the oppression of the Sikhs and the Marathas. The petty Muhammadan chiefs of the Punjab rallied round him during his descent on Peshawar and Lahore The imbecile Shah Alam begged him to deliver him from the Maratha yoke The Rohillas offered him help But Shah Zaman's invasions failed to dislodge the Sikh confederacies from their established position in the Punjab, and incidently, brought the Sikhs, for the first time, into direct political relations with the English.

6 Ranjit Singh assumes power

The Afghan invasions of the Punjab also brought into prominence the minor Ranjit Singh, whose early life is obscured for want of authentic information The general belief that he remained under the tutelage of a regency composed of his mother Mai Malwan, his mother in-law Sada Kaur, and his father's principal adviser Lakhpat Rai—"a selfish and dissolute scamp," is not supported by the official Diarist of the Lahore Darbar. The regency, if any, lasted exactly three months, for, in 1792 at the age of 12, Ranjit Singh seems to have assumed full powers He received *nazars* and tributes from the dependent sardars, and early in 1793, appointed Lakhpat Rai as his *diwan*, and Dal Singh as his principal adviser The renowned Qadiri saint Ghulam Mohyiuddin predicted at his accession that the young Sikh chief would soon destroy his enemies and carve out a kingdom for himself[1]

The youthful Sukerchakia chief was beset with three main problems during the 5 years of his minority He was chiefly concerned with curbing the rivalries of his two ministers, his mother's abortive attempts to control the administration, and her alleged dissolute conduct, which led to her eventual murder. Ranjit Singh dismissed his *diwan* Lakhpat Rai, who was alleged to be the paramour of the rani and arranged his assassination while on an expedition to Kitas The affair of Mai Malwan's murder, however, is highly controversial and Ranjit Singh's guilt has never been established directly The official Diarist alleges that after having dismissed the minister for an open revolt, the assassination of Mai Malwan took place without the knowledge of his son[2] The charge that like his father, Ranjit Singh was also a matricide, therefore, cannot be fully substantiated

Soon afterwards, in conjunction with the Kanhayas, he worsted the powerful Ramgarhias and seized their main city Miani The expedition against the Ramgarhias had been undertaken to punish them for their encroachments on the Kanhaya territories, which were in the possession of Ranjit Singh's mother-in law, rani Sada Kaur. Since the downfall of the regency, the influence of the rani in the affairs of

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1 UT, II, p 31 32 and 37 *ff* On the subject *vide* generally, Prinsep, p 47, Latif p 346 Osborne p 10, Griffin, p 162 also *Sikkhan de Raj di Vikhia*, p 66
2 *Ibid* p 37

the Sukerchakias seems to have become predominant, and with the co-operation of the Kanhayas, Ranjit Singh at the age of 15 was looking forward to an opportunity of becoming the master of Lahore.

7. Lahore under the Bhangis

At this time, Lahore was ruled by a weak Bhangi triumvirate. In 1765, a Bhangi-Kanhaya-Sukerchakia combination had expelled Kahuli Mal, the rapacious Hindu governor of the Durranis. The new masters of Lahore ransacked it indiscriminately, dividing the spoils among themselves The city itself was divided between the three Bhangi sardars. The Sukerchakia chief, Charat Singh, captured the famous cannon *Zamzama* and retired to Gujranwala. The capital of the Punjab remained in the hands of the Bhangis till 1796, when on 3 January, Shah Zaman occupied it An Afghan army of 20,000 under Muhammad Khan, the Shah's Vazier, having expelled the Bhangis, made a triumphant entry into the town and the Shah received the submission of the people and expediously dispatched a contingent to exterminate the Sikhs in the neighbourbood. The Shah's stay at Lahore, however, proved to be short ; the news of his brother Shah Mahmud's rebellion hastened his departure and the Bhangi sardars came out of their hiding and re-occupied it.

During this period, Ranjit Singb seems to have kept himself pertinaciously aloof. The Afghan forces had passed through his territories, but there is no positive evidence, as claimed hy Cunningham,[1] Elphinstone[2] and Latif[3] of the estnhlishment of a friendly contact hetween the Sikh chief and the Afghan king The Lahore Diarist, on the other hand, asserts that Ranjit Singh treated the Shah's demand for presents and passage of troops contemptuously with the answer that he would get them on the field of hattle[4]

While the Durrani invasions convulsed the centre of the Punjah, Ranjit Singh had realised the inahility of the Bhangis to hold it permanently against the onslaughts of the Afghans Two years earlier he had visited Lahore and had visualised its central position Compared to Gujranwala, the seat of the Sukerchakias, Lahore represented the symhol of prestige and power to any master of the Punjah It commanded the suh montane region in the north-west, the

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1 p 120
2 *Kingdom of Kabul*, II, *p 317*
3 *History of the Punjab*, *p 505*
4 UT, *op cit*

hilly tracts to the north-east, the Doab in the centre and the barren tablelands in the south including Multan, Bahawalpur and Sind To wrest it from the Bhangis was the main ambition of Ranjit Singh

On 25 October 1798, Shah Zaman left Peshawar and advanced on Lahore A Sukerchakia Bhangi coalition with 10,000 horse attempted to hem in the army of the Shah[1] The Sikhs drove a wedge between the main Afghan army and cut off a force of 5,000 men commanded by the Shah's deputy near Jehlum Shah Zaman had, however, little difficulty in occupying Lahore, during the siege of which, the official Lahore Diarist boasts that Ranjit Singh in a spirit of youthful bravado challenged the Shah to a duel[2] The Bhangi sardars as usual retired to the hills and Ranjit Singh crossed the Sutlej with his army, and employed his time in seizing towns and territories and exacting tribute

The Shah stayed at Lahore for about four months He made a hasty retreat towards Kabul on hearing the news that his rebellious brother had secured the support of the Persian King, Fateh Ali Shah, in his claim to the Kingdom of Kabul He left his Indian possessions under the control of his general Shahanchi Khan

8 Exaggeration of Afghan Threat

The faint rumblings of the Afghan armies beyond the Indus had created an uproar at Calcutta The Shah's first two invasions did not alarm the British; but his seizure of Lahore, and the reports that Emperor Shah Alam had sent him an invitation, presented to Wellesley's Government a possibility of Afghan penetration beyond the Jumna[3] It was feared that an Afghan-Sikh combination and the overtures of the Rohillas and the Marathas to the Shah might endanger Delhi and Oudh[4] Under this supposition, the matter began to be discussed seriously in official circles both in India and England Soon afterwards, a communication from the Shah informed the Governor-General of his intention of invading India and demanded the services of the Nawab Vazier of Oudh and the British Government for the prosecution of his project[5]

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1 PRC viii No 7
2 UT p 38
3 Maj Gen Sir James Craig's *Memoir on the probable invasion of Zaman Shah*—(WD) i Appendix E
4 Wellesley to Dundas 23 February, 1793—(WD) i No III
5 *Ibid* 6 July, 1798, *op cit* No XXII

It is interesting to consider whether there was any real Afghan threat to the British in India at this time That it had been purposely magnified by Wellesley to force his treaty of 1801 on the Oudh Nawab, would be an understatement "My latest accounts of Zamaun Shah," he wrote to the Secret Committee in April 1800, "are favourable to the prosecution of my views on Oude "[1]

It is extremely doubtful that Wellesley ever seriously believed that Shah Zaman's resources would enable him to execute, what he himself termed as "his romantic designs "[2] Sir John Shore's inopportune compliments and presents to the Kabul Shah, before Wellesley's arrival had encouraged him to advise the Governor General "to continue to walk in the path of allegiance and fidelity "

Elaborate speculations to counteract the supposed threat followed It was fondly imagined that the Sikhs and the Afghans would combine to deliver the Mughal emperor from Maratha bondage, and that the Shah would then march on Oudh A Sikh-Maratha combination to oppose him, though impracticable, seemed an admirable solution[3] The fact that the Shah could advance to Lahore, showed that the Sikhs could not at that time form a barrier against him[4] British political relations with the Sikhs were too feeble to admit of any immediate response from them Disunited and distracted as they were, a point of union, however, could possibly be effected between them Left to themselves, they would not make any opposition at all to the Shah's approach[5] "The arrival of the Shah at Lahore," wrote Wellesley to the Court of Directors, "with the declared purpose of advancing on Delhi, and the defenceless state of the intervening possessions of the Seiks and the Marathas, induced me to assemble the main body of the army of Bengal on the frontier of Oude "[6]

Wellesley's official despatches to the Secret Committee, unduly exaggerated the Afghan threat to India[7] The Home Government

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee 23 April, 1800—BISL(I) Vol 3

2 Wellesley to Dundas 6 July, 1798 *op cit* No XXII

3 Craig s *Memoir etc* (WD), 1 *op cit*

4 Wellesley to Dundas 23 February, 1798 *op cit* No III

5 Craig to Wellesley, 13 October, 1798, *op cit* No LXXXIX

6 Wellesley to Court of Directors, (WD), 1 No CXXXIV

7 *Vide* particularly, those of 24 December, 1798 (paras 4 and 23) 13 January 1799 (paras 26 28) 8 February 1799 (paras 4 5) 12 February 1799 (paras 20) and 22 April, 1799 (paras 4 5) BISL(I) Vol 3 (1798 1800)

received a false impression that the menace was real, and that the Afghan occupation of Lahore constituted a direct threat to India's northern frontier[1] Grandiloquent plans in cypher issued out of India House for a general system of defensive alliance for the security of British possessions in India Henry Dundas' private despatches to Wellesley exhibit the confusion at Cannon Row It was even believed that the Shah had combined with Bonaparte, Tipu and the Marathas against the British, that he hoped to occupy Delhi, seize Oudh and co operate with the French in the conquest of Gujrat and overthrow the British power in India[2]

9 Counteracting Measures

While at home discussions continued between Henry Dundas and Lord Grenville as to the best way of preventing the French transferring an army to India from the Mediterranean through the Persian Gulf or by the overland route[3] suggestions were made for the steps to be taken upon the Coromondal and Malabar coasts[4] The Indian Government took steps to thwart Shah Zaman s imaginary combination with the French, the Marathas and the Sikhs Sindha was offered a defensive treaty[5] A Bombay civilian Crow was sent on a commercial mission to Sind to gain political advantages[6] The Lucknow Resident was directed to arrange with the Sikh chiefs a concerted plan of operations against the Shah[7] The Bhangi and Ramgarhia sardars were already in communication with the Governor General[8] Military measures supplemented the political Troops were assembled at Kanauj Jaunpur and Lucknow, infantry and artillery were moved to Anupshahr, a supply depot was established at Allahabad, and plans were set in motion for the construction of a temporary boat bridge across the Jumna The Oudh Nawab was directed to support the Anupshahr forces in an emergency[9]

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1 Calcutta Letter 13 June and 4 July 1798—*Wellesley Papers* (BM) Vol 37274 *fol* 1 7a

2 Dundas to Wellesley (Private)—*Wellesley Papers op cit* particularly those of 21 March 1799 *fol* 141 *ff* 9 October 1799 *fol* 253ab-256ab

3 Dundas to Grenv lle 13 June 1798 *op c t fol* 45 *ff*

4 Dundas to Wellesley 16 June 1798 *op cit fol* 30 40

5 Wellesley to Dundas 6 July 1798—(WD) 1 XXII

6 Pearce—*Memo rs and Correspondence of Marquess of* Wellesley 1 p 240 *ff*

7 Governor General to Secret Comm ttee 24 December 1798 BISL(I) Vol 3

8 BPC(I) 9 June 1897 C63

9 Wellesley to Court of D rectors 21 November 1798—(WD) 1 No CV

At this time, the British did not regard the disunited Sikhs of the Punjab powerful enough to form a barrier against the Shah's advance. In fact, Ranjit Singh has no place in the official British records of 1797, 1798 and early 1799

The Shah's retreat gave an opportunity to Ranjit Singh to expel his deputy Shahanchi Khan He formed a combination with Sahib Singh of Gujrat and Milkha Singh Pindiwala, and with an enormous Sikh force of 31,000 horse, fell upon the Afghan garrison while Shah Zaman was still at Peshawar. Shahanchi Khan was killed at Gujrat, and with the dispersal of his forces, all semblance of Afghan authority between the Ravi and the Jehlum was obliterated [1]

On 7 July Ranjit Singh occupied Lahore It is described in detail in the local histories of Sohan Lal,[2] Bute Shah[3] and Mufti [4] The British records in the Foreign and Secret Department merely summarise the sketchy news-letters In the *Poona Residency Correspondence*, it seems to have been treated as the probable, if not possible result of a Sikh-Afghan coalition [5] The general belief that in 1799 the Afghan Shah bestowed Lahore upon Ranjit Singh is shared both by Cunningham[6] and Elphinstone,[7] who mention it as a reward for the services rendered by the Sikh ruler in restoring to Shah Zaman, the Afghan heavy artillery which had become embedded in the flooded Jehlum Murray in his report omits this important incident Prinsep makes a similar statement on the authority of Wade, who seems to have relied upon British official intelligence of April 1800 [8] Khushwaqat Rai who wrote the *Tārikh-i-Sikhkhān* for Col David Ochterlony, has merely summarised the official news-letters [9] With the exception of Mufti,[10] who claims that in return for this service, the Shah offered to Ranjit Singh the governorship of Lahore,

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1 *UT*, II, p 34 *ff* The number of forces as given by the Lahore Diarist appears to be highly exaggerated

2 *Ibid* II p 40 *ff*

3 *Tārikh i Panjāb*, (BM) Or 1673 *fol* 315 *ff*

4 *'Ibratnāma* (*I*) MS E 504 *fol* 219 *sq*

5 PRC VIII and IX

6 p 120

7 II p 317

8 PRC IX 7

9 (BM) MS No Or 187 *fol* 138 *ff*

10 *'Ibratnāma* (*I*) MS No E 504, *fol* 219

the later writers, Latif and Griffin, have followed the earlier versions[1] But the official Lahore Diarist makes no reference to the Shah's grant On the other hand, writing to Collins, the Resident with Sindhia in December 1800, Ranjit Singh admits following the Shah's retreating army and witnessing the swamping of the Shah's artillery in the flooded Jehlum, but he merely observes: "That being the boundary of my territory, I assembled a number of people, recovered the guns from the midst of the river by utmost exertions and appropriated them to my own use "[2]

10 Occupation of Lahore

Be that as it may, the Afghan bestowal of Lahore on Ranjit Singh, if ever made, was of little practical value to the latter in the occupation of the capital It seems that the Bhangi triumvirate had proved extremely weak and oppressive with the result that the citizens drew up a petition inviting Ranjit Singh to come and deliver them from the Bhangis An agent of the conspirators met Ranjit Singh at Rasulnagar, where plans for the assault on the city were made On 4 July, 1899, with an army of 25 000 men he marched on the capital On the 6th, the guards inside threw open the gates of the citadel and on the 7th the fort was occupied The Bhangi sardars, who had merely made a show of resistance, were allowed to leave the town unmolested[3]

The occupation of Lahore by the youthful Sukerchakia chief in July 1799, is a landmark in the history of the Sikhs. It laid the foundation of a sovereign Sikh monarchy in the Punjab At the moment, however it created consternation among the Manjha confederacies The Bhangis of Gujrat, the Ramgarhias and other petty Sikh chiefs, joined by the Pathan chief of Kasur, collected their forces to oppose the new master of Lahore[4] But the confederates were divided among themselves, and the unnatural Afghan-Sikh coalition bred distrust in the soldiery and no serious opposition was offered to Ranjit Singh Soon afterwards, Ranjit Singh reduced Jammu, seized Mirowal, Narowal, Sialkot, Dilawargarh and Wazirabad, and on his return to Lahore, received the British agent Mir Yusuf Ali Khan[5]

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1 Latif p 348 Griffin *Ranjit Singh* (Oxford 1893) p 161

2 Ranjit Singh to Collins—PRC, IX No 409 The letter also mentions that the guns were later conveyed to Multan through the Shah's vakil]

3 UT, II p 40 *ff*

4 *Ibid* p 44

5 Latif, p 352

Chapter III

EARLY CIS SUTLEJ TRANSACTIONS 1800-1805

1. Ranjit Singh remains unnoticed

To the British, the rise of Ranjit Singh as a political power in the Punjab and his occupation of Lahore in 1799 had no political significance The growth of a sovereign Sikh state in the Punjab remained almost unnoticed It was an exaggerated notion of Shah Zaman's power that drew the attention of the Government of India to Lahore[1] Collins, the British Resident with Sindhia, reported to the Governor General that a *khil'at* had arrived for the Sukerchakia Chief from Kabul and that Ranjit Singh held Lahore as the Shah's satrap[2] For the first time the Lahore Chief is mentioned in British official correspondence He is described as a person of considerable power and influence. The Resident with Sindhia, however, never clearly grasped the true significance of the occupation of Lahore, for, he continually harped on the eventual possibility of a Sikh Afghan combination in the interests of the Shah[3] In this Collins misjudged both the Sikhs and the Afghans, and also the fact, that Ranjit Singh had not only taken possession of Lahore but had recovered Rohtas, Hasan Abdal and Attock and was weighing the possibility of seizing Kashmir and Peshawar in the north, and Multan in the south His reports, however, created a mild flutter at Fort William and Lord Wellesley decided to send a good-will mission into the Sikh country to counteract the so called "insidious proposals" of the Durrani prince

2 Yusuf Ali's Mission

Early in 1800 Wellesley had written to Daulat Rao Sindhia to send a confidential agent to the principal Sikh chiefs for the purpose of persuading them to unite in opposing the invasion of Shah Zaman and of reconciling them to the interests of the

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1 PRC, IX 7 17B
2 *Ibid* Collins to Governor General, 11 May, 1800
3 *Ibid* 12 September 1797 No 21A

British Government[1] In May, it was decided to send a separate *vakil* to them The Resident with Sindhia selected Mir Yusuf Ali Khan for the purpose, and furnished him with letters of introduction to Panjit Singh and all the principal Sikh chiefs[2] Accompained by Raur Mal, a Sikh *vakil*, Yusuf Ali left Fatehgarh and early in July, arrived at Sossnah (Sirsa ?), where he met George Thomas, a British military deserter and a soldier of fortune, who, after an adventurous career, had carved out for himself a small principality at Hansi, in the wastelands of Haryana Thomas treated him with kindness and provided him with an escort to Jind the principal city of raja Bhag Singh[3] Most of the Sikh sardars eyed him with distrust Yusuf Ali Khan found the Sikh country in such a state of disturbance that but for Raur Mal's influence with the Sikh chiefs, he would have been obliged to return[4] We do not know how he was treated by the various chiefs of the Cis Sutlej region, except that raja Bhag Singh attempted to undo the emissary's work at Lahore

The briefing of Yusuf Ali Khan appears to have been crude[5] Ranjit Singh, the protector of the Sikhs, whose fortitude and gallant conduct had saved the Punjab from devastation, was to be acquainted with the cruel and treacherous character of the Afghans It would be dangerous for the Sikhs to enter into any political connection with Shah Zaman whose hostile designs towards India would make it necessary for him to enslave the Sikh nation The religious intolerance, greed and remorseless cruelty of the Durranis had so often been experienced by the people of India, that if so renowned a leader as Ranjit Singh formed any connection with them, every prince in India would be surprised at his decision to ally himself with the hated Afghans

The envoy was to impress upon Ranjit Singh the superiority of British arms and the certainty that Shah Zaman would share the fate of Tipu Sultan, who had received help from the French—

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1 Marquis Wellesley to General Lake 2 March 1804—BSPC(I) C11, para 4
2 Collins to Governor General 24 June 1800 PRC IX 7
3 *Ibid* 26 July 1800 *op cit* No 19
4 *Ibid* 10 August, 1800, *op cit* No 236
5 *Ibid* 24 June 1800 *op cit* No 17B (Enclosure—*Instructions to Yusuf Ali Khan*)

"the Durranis of Europe" The Sikh chiefs were told that if the Durranis were permitted to enter Hindusthan, their families would be dishonoured, peaceful cultivators of the soil robbed of the fruits of their industry, and the Sikh country ruined

But the Shah was never destined to cross the Khyber again as a conqueror, for soon after his return to Afghanistan, he was dethroned and blinded, and for a decade internal revolutions weakened the country Actually, when Yusuf Ali Khan arrived at Lahore, late in 1800, the threat of the Afghan invasion had practically receded

The British mission does not seem to have made much impression on Ranjit Singh The official Diarist of Lahore merely records the arrival of Yusuf Ali Khan at the Darbar (Court) and observes that from the news-writers the Maharaja had gained information about the power and majesty of the British people in the dominion of Hindusthan Yusuf Ali Khan was sent as a *vakil* to Lahore and after a short stay returned with presents from the Maharaja to the British[1] He is silent about the objects of the mission, the Maharaja's reactions to the proposals and the intrigues of Perron and raja Bhag Singh to have it expelled from the Court From later British records, we learn that, at the same time[2] *khil'ats* were conferred on the chiefs of Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Kaithal Writing to Lake in March 1804, Wellesley observed that the Cis Sutlej chieftains had maintained a disposition highly favourable to the British Government[3] Perhaps, the only importance of the mission lies in the fact that it established a vague sort of contact between the East India Company, the Sikh sardars and Ranjit Singh

3 Perron s intrigues

Perron, Daulat Rao Sindhia's all powerful deputy at Delhi, in the meantime, had heard of the arrival of Yusuf Ali Khan at Lahore He at once took measures to prevent the extension of British influence into the Sikh country, which he considered was an exclusive Maratha

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1 UT ii 54 The *Zafarnāma i Ranjit Singh* (p 13) and other Persian accounts simply refer to the gifts which he had brought from the Governor-General (valued at 1 000 rupees) and in return he obtained a Sanad and was dismissed

2 BSPC(I)—8 April 1808 C9, para 4.

3 Wellesley to Lake 2 March 1804 BSPC(I) C11, para 4.

reserve He wrote to raja Bhag Singh of Jind, exhorting him to counteract British influence at his nephew's Court The Frenchman's hatred of the British equalled the Englishman's contempt of the Afghan, or at least, his reflections on British imperialistic designs provided for Bhag Singh a forceful argument Bhag Singh informed Ranjit Singh on behalf of Perron, that the English first commenced a friendly intercourse with the chiefs , then they established camps and factories in their territories When they had gained a footiog, they usurped the country and annihilated the power of the chieftains This, he said, had been proved by British conduct towards Raja Chet Singh, Nawab Qasim Ali Khan, the Nawab Vazier of Oudh and Tipu Sultan With the same motives, they had now sent a *vakil* to Lahore [1]

Perron had also sent a communication to Raojit Singh, which *inter alia* warned him that the main object of the British *vakil* was to inspect and report on the internal state of the Puojab, in order that his territories might be overrun with large armies He advised him not to place the least reliance on the assertions of the agent but to drive him out of his kingdom [2] As instructed by Perron, Bhag Singh also seared the Sikh chiefs He informed them that the English wished to annex the Sikh country The mission would be followed by the establishment of camps, posts, agencies and custom houses and ultimately their territories would be taken possession of by the English [3]

These letters were dispatched by Bhag Singh to Lahore by special messengers Yusuf Ali Khan reported that after reading them Ranjit Singh's attitude was so hostile that he thought it prudent to leave Lahore [4] Collins reported on 5 January, that the Sikh ruler was "highly exasperated" and had actually ordered a party of horse to march and expel the English agent from Lahore [5]

4 *Kharita from Ranjit Singh*

Yusuf Ali Khan's anxiety proved to be ill founded While the British *vakil* was still brooding over "the evil intentions" of Raojit Singh towards him, the Maharaja's confidential messengers were on their way to Fatehgarh to deliver to the Resident an *arzi* and a *kharita*

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1 Collins to Governor General 28 January 1808—PRC, ix Nos 242C and D Yusuf Ali Khan seems to be a clever man While complaining to Collins of the anti British intrigue at Lahore he had secured copies of Perron s and Bhag Singh's letters which he forwarded to the Resident

2 Perron to Ranjit Singh (no date)—PRC, ix No 240

3 Perron to Bhag Singh (no date) *op cit* No 242B

4 Yusuf Ali Khan to Collins 12 December, 1800–PRC, ix No 240A

5 Collins to Governor General 5 January, 1801, *op cit* No 240

addressed to the Governor-General[1] In his communication to Collins, Ranjit Singh informed him in detail about his relations with Shah Zaman The Afghan king, he said, was desirous of conciliating him, but no reliance could be placed on the oaths and declarations of the Durranis, who were confirmed liars. He had, therefore, adopted a temporising policy to keep up appearances, otherwise, most of the Sikh chiefs would have immediately made advances to him "I therefore," he concluded, "now become your friend by correspondence, cherish the continuation of this amicable intercourse and detain Mir Yusuf Ali Khan with me, while at the same time, I apprize you that Zaman Shah is the enemy to the lives and property of both your government and mine, and meditates the ruin of both states"[2]

Referring to the malevolent and unjust attempts of Perron and Bhag Singh to prejudice him against the British, Ranjit Singh in a further communication, dated 13 January, 1801 to the Resident set at rest all doubts. "Certain superiors of my tribe (meaning Bhag Singh)," he wrote, "and certain persons of your nation (meaning Perron), actuated by selfish views have written stories and accounts to me tending to excite suspicions and destroy the friendship that subsists between us, but I place no reliance on their communications; I believe them false, and they are intended for interested persons On this head it is by no means my design to violate my friendship for you. I have therefore treated Mir Usuf with all the attention due to his situation."[3]

5. Cis Sutlej Region in 1800

Towards the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Sutlej-Yamuna region was principally dominated by four Sikh Misals—the *Nishanwalas*, the *Nihangs*, the *Karorsinghias* and the *Phulkian* Besides the petty states of Ladwa, Buria and Thanisar, two Muhammadan states of Malerkotala and Kunjpura played their minor rôle in the Cis-Sutlej affairs With the exception of the *Phulkian* Misal and its distant off-shoot Kaithal, the other Cis-Sutlej states were insignificant. The *Phulkian* house, sub-divided into three separate principalities—Nabha, Patiala and Jind, has played a very important part in Cis-Sutlej history

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1 *Ibid* PRC, ix No 273B

2 Collins to Wellesley, 18 December, 1800 *op cit* (Enclosure from Ranjit Singh)

3 Collins to Wellesley, 28 January, 1801—PRC ix No 24A (Enclosure from Ranjit Singh, dated 13 January, 1801)

Patiala, the most powerful of all states, after the death of its strong man Amar Singh, was ruled by Sahib Singh, "whose weakness approached imbecility and whose territory though large was completely anarchical"[1] Bhag Singh of Jind, a maternal uncle of Ranjit Singh, was considered as the wise man of the country He was a shrewd and calculating opportunist, foremost in every political transaction and a confirmed mediater in the affairs of Manjha and Malwa Griffin calls him a fairly reliable man, though a jolly liver and a hard drinker[2] Raja Jaswant Singh of Nabha was by far the most sober and intelligent of all the Phulkian rulers,[3] "the nearest approach to the civilised among the whole set of rude barons"[4] Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal was a cunning fox unfathomable and slippery like an eel Like Bhag Singh, he always kept his interests in the forefront, but unlike him, his shifting loyalties were always transparent The Pathan states of Malerkotla and Kunjpura were torn with internal strife; the former was ruled by Ataullah Khan, on whom Ranjit Singh had levied a heavy contribution, for the payment of a portion of which the chiefs of Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Kaithal had stood sureties by establishing police and revenue posts within the Pathan chief's territory[5] Kunjpura was in a confused state because of a succession feud

6 Perron and Thomas

Over these states of the Cis Sutlej region loomed large, the shadow of the Maratha Deputy Perron, who since his ascendency at Delhi in 1797, was responsible for Daulat Rao Sindhia's affairs in Northern India Perron was determined to extend Maratha influence beyond the Jumna The Malwa and Sirhind sardars, who had refused to join the English adventurer, George Thomas in a combination against Shah Zaman in 1798, now found him a formidable foe Soon after, Thomas laid siege to Jind and worsted a combination of the Phulkian chiefs at Narawind An inglorious truce was patched up between the adventurer and the chiefs of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Kaithal, Ladwa and Thanisar; but

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1 Kiernan, *Metcalfe's Mission to Lahore*, p 2
2 *Rajas of the Punjab*, p 283
3 Ochterlony to Edmonstone, 9 February, 1809—BSPC(I) 27 February, 1809 C39
4 Griffin *op cit* p 336
5 Ochterlony to Edmonstone, 9 February, 1809, para 8, *ut supra*,

the Sikh sardars accused each other of treachery and Thomas, finding them doubtful allies in the impending rupture with the Marathas, broke the truce and ravaged their territories. He was, however, defeated by the Jind armies at Safaidon and discreetly retired to Hansi early in 1801.

Harassed by Thomas, the Sikh chiefs resolved to send a deputation to Perron at Delhi The attitude of Jaswant Singh of Nabha was, however, lukewarm to the Sikh confederacy. He did not join them in their visit to Delhi[1] The chiefs represented to Perron that the Sikhs had always been dependent upon the master of Delhi They accepted Maratha paramountcy in the Sikh country and sought protection from the ravages of George Thomas Perron readily agreed to help them A force under Louis Bourquin was sent by him to expel Thomas from their territories and to establish Maratha supremacy in the Cis-Sutlej region[2]

But while the combined forces of Louis Bourquin and the Sikhs expelled George Thomas, the chiefs soon began to groan under the heavy exactions imposed upon them. Perron had extorted from them a promise of an annual tribute of 100,000 rupees against their estimated revenue of 300,000 rupees[3] The *Poona Residency Correspondence* shows them absolutely subservient to Daulat Rao's will and Perron's command.[4] The Patiala raja exchanged turbans with Perron, as he did a few years later with Ranjit Singh But if the sardars expected to gain any territorial rewards for their subservience, they were sorely disappointed. Both Perron and Bourquin subjected them to heavy exactions, and "instead of being received as allies they found that they would merely be tolerated as dependents or as servants."

7 Perron and Ranjit Singh

Perron's ambitions, however, transcended the Sutlej and extended to Lahore and Multan He contemplated a treaty with Ranjit Singh of Lahore.[5] A confidential agent named Sadasukh

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1 *Punjab States Gazetteers*, XVIIA, p 342.

2 Seton to Edmonstone, 3 April, 1803 Cl, para 4

3 The tribute promised by the Sikh chiefs was as follows Patiala, Rs 38, 250 (revenue 114 750), Jind, 7,250 (21,750) Nabha 9,500 (28,500) Kaithal, 15,000 Total Rs 100 000 (300,000) *Vide* Griffin, p 383 *ff*

4 PRC, IX No 39 40

5 Ochterlony to Wellesley, 7 December, 1804—BSPC(I) 31 January, 1805, C230

was sent by him to Bhag Singh, asking the Jind ruler to discuss the matter with his nephew Bhag Singh agreed to act as an intermediary on the condition that Ranjit Singh would possess complete authority in the territories of Lahore and Manjha[1] It is, however, doubtful whether any treaty of alliance was signed between Perron and Ranjit Singh David Ochterlony, the Resident at Delhi, writing to Marquis Wellesley on 7 December, 1804 claims on the authority of Perron's confidential servants that a treaty between their master and Ranjit Singh had been entered into at a place near Karnal The agreement was based on reciprocal military assistance and vague financial arrangements Ranjit Singh was to help the Frenchman with his cavalry in the reduction of the country in the Sutlej Jumna region and the latter would provide the Sikh ruler with a force for the conquest of the territory south of the river Sutlej[2] All this, however, appears to be highly conjectural The official chronicler of the Lahore Darbar does not say a word about this important transaction That Ranjit Singh was too shrewd to enter into an unremunerative alliance with the Marathas is proved by the fact that he informed the British Government of the approaches made by Perron[3]

8 End of Maratha Dominance

Whether or not Ranjit Singh came to an understanding with Perron, he and the Phulkian chiefs stood cautiously aloof during the Anglo-Maratha struggle in 1803 Perron was himself overthrown and his ambition to extend Maratha supremacy in the north came to nothing On 11 September, Louis Bourquin was defeated by Lake beneath the walls of Delhi The Marathas suffered another reverse at Laswari (1 November, 1803) and the treaty of Surjiarjangaon ended their influence in northern India. The British forces had already entered Delhi (15 September, 1803) and the Marathas were forced to cede Delhi, Agra, Rohtak, Hissar, Sirsa and Gurgaon

Except for the acknowledgement of a vague sort of paramountcy exercised over the Sikh chiefs by means of heavy exactions, the Maratha influence in the Cis-Sutlej region was of

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1 PRC ix No 34 46A
2 BSPC(I) 31 January, 1805 C230, para 3
3 Wellesley to Lake, 2 August, 1803—BSPC (I) 2 March, 1804 C11, para 5.

little political significance It was also of short duration. The sardars watched the development of events in northern India with apparent nervousness and sensed the impending disaster for the Marathas. Sahib Singh of Patiala was already in correspondence with Collins (June 1802) paving the way for a friendly alliance with the British.[1] Other Phulkian chiefs had kept themselves assidiously aloof and watched with unconcealed satisfaction, the overthrow of Perron, their former benefactor and the dispersal of Bourquin's armies Ranjit Singh was busy subjugating Chiniot (1802), Pindi Bhattian, Jhang and Sahiwal (1803). He does not appear to have grasped the significance of the end of Maratha dominance in north India.[2]

Thomas was dead, Perron was overthrown and Sindhia's power completely destroyed in north India The Phulkian chiefs in conjunction with Kaithal, allied themselves with the British During the battle of Delhi, only Gurdit Singh of Ladwa, Bhanga Singh of Thanisar and a few other petty Sikh chiefs, with a combined strength of 5,000 men, had fought on the side of the Marathas On 15 September, 1803 both the Jind and Kaithal rulers joined the British camp Later, Lord Lake met most of the Cis-Sutlej sardars at Nanak Toda and readily accepted their advances The Government considered it essential to undo the effects of Perron's malignant statement and to remove from their minds any apprehensions which they might entertain for their authority and independence Lake had been directed to send friendly letters to the Sikh chiefs[3] That the British Government had little information about the state of affairs in the trans-Jumna region in 1803, is evident from the fact that neither Fort William nor the Delhi Residency had any idea as to whom these communications were to be sent, until an agent of the Resident with Sindhia furnished the names of the Sikh chiefs[4]

9 Background of British Policy

Marquis Wellesley had, in his communication of 2 August, outlined the broad principles of British policy. In the impending

1 PRC, IX No 64

2 For excellent accounts of Ranjit Singh's early conquests, *vide* generally, the *Umadat ut-Tuarikh*, the *Tārikh i Sikhkhan* the *Tawārikh i Panjāb* and the *Zafarnāma'i Ranjit Singh* None of these authorities, however, notice the end of Maratha supremacy in north India.

3 Wellesley to Lake, 2 August, 1803—BSPC(I) 2 March, 1804 C11.

4 *Ibid*, paras 6 and 10

Anglo-Maratha struggle, it was considered practicable to wean the Sikhs away from Maratha influence, and if possible, to secure their co-operation, or at least, their assurances of neutrality[1] To gain this object, the probability of British success against the Marathas was to be impressed upon them In addition, the lure of British protection and the exemption from payment of any tribute in the future was to be held before them[2]

The response to the British communication was encouraging Ranjit Singh replied that he was earnestly desirous of entering into a treaty with the English, and that in return for a defensive alliance, he was prepared to accept British supremacy over all countries south of the Sutlej[3] Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal, who had come with 2 000 horse to Perron s assistance, agreed to join the British army unconditionally[4] Sahib Singh of Patiala and the Nabha and Jind chiefs were most eager to show their attachment to the British Government[5] The British Government, however considered all these offeres of co operation as evasive and of dubious political value Ranjit Singh was considered to be at a great distance from the scene of operations, though he could exert his influence with the other Sikh chiefs and induce them to favour the cause of the British Government[6] Sahib Singh was suspected of being in league with the Marathas, and from the intelligence received from the Lucknow Residency, the Government concluded that most of the Sikh chiefs were still under Perron's influence Wellesley s presumption was correct The Sikh chiefs though well disposed towards the British Government, could hardly come out openly on the British side until they were fully convinced of the defeat of Perron Their opportunism was based on self-interest and they were deterred from making a premature disclosure of their intentions from fear of the Marathas

For his neutrality, Bhag Singh of Jind received two *sanads* from Lake The first, dated 26 September, 1803 confirmed his title to the estate of Khar Khodak, and the second, dated 7 March, 1804 granted

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1 Wellesley to Lake *op cit* paras 15 and 16 Lake to Wellesley 6 September 1803 RSPC(I) 2 March, 1804 C79 C97

2. *Ibid* paras 12 and 13.

3. Lake to Wellesley 6 September 1803, *op cit* (Enclosure to C79)

4 *Ibid* Paper of Information communicated by Syed Reza to General Lake

5 *Ibid* 22 September 1803—RSPC(I) 2 March 1804 C118

6 Wellesley to Lake *op cit* paras 11 and 14

to him and Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal the pargannas of Faridpur, Gohana and Barsat

10 British Punitive Expedition

While the Phulkian chiefs had been won over, a small group of pro-Maratha sardars, who had fought against the English in 1803 and had been dispersed, soon started plundering raids into British territory These were Gurdit Singh of Ladwa and Karnal, Sher Singh of Buria, Roy Singh of Jagadhari, Mehtab Singh of Thanisar, Jodh Singh of Kalsia and Karam Singh Shahidi with a total horse strength of 1800[1] To check their depredations in the westeren portion of the Jumna, early in February 1804, Lt Col Burn, who commanded a detachment at Deoband, sent a British force under Lt Birch[2] Birch was joined by Skinner and their combined forces defeated the Sikhs at Saharanpur[3] Soon afterwards, the forees of the Sikh chiefs of Ladwa, Buriya, Jagadhari and other petty sardars assembled on the western side of the Jumna ready to cross that river and engage Skinner who was at Gangor Ghat[4] Burn was hard pressed for reinforcements nnd the forces of the Sikhs seemed formidable He reported his inability to expel them from the Doab and feared that more Sikhs were likely to join them[5]

11 Conduct of Jind and Kaithal

Unmindful of the Resident's request to assist Col Burn in expelling the Sikh forces from the Doab, both Bhag Singh and Lal Singh had, on 2 Decemher, joined him at Panipat They hegan making frivolous exeuses for not reinforeing Burn, and wished to acquire the territories of Gurdit Singh of Ladwa

Ochterlony the Resident at Delhi reprimanded them severely and advised them that if they wished to prove the faith of their professions of attachment, they should immediately join Burn[6] But continued procrastination on the part of these two chiefs convinced Ochterlony that they were avoiding the fulfilment of the speeific eonditions of their grants, which imposed upon them an obligation to assist the British

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1 Ochterlony (Offg Resident Delhi) to Wellesley 15 December 1804—BSPC(I) 31 January 1805 C236—Annexure

2 Military Secretary to C-in C to Ochterlony 26 February 1804—(P) 2 2

3 Burn to Ochterlony 4 March 1804—(P) 2 3.

4 *Ibid* 12 June 1804—(P) 2 7

5 Ochterlony to Wellesley 7 December, 1804—BSPC(I) 31 January 1805 C230

6 *Ibid* para I

Government in an emergency Meanwhile, Bhanga Singh of Thanisar, with a force of 2,000 3,000, expressed a wish to help the British on the condition that Panipat should be given to him as a *jaidād* (grant) for his services His nephew Mehtab Singh had joined Roy Singh of Jagadhari and Gurdit Singh of Ladwa in plundering raids west of the Jumna Gurdit Singh, the chief instigator of these disturbances, who had made solemn promises of attachment to the British Government and had violated them, now solicited from the Commander-in-Chief the confirmation of his parganna of Jinjanna in the Doab "His effrontery and treachery," observed Ochterlony to Marquis Wellesley, "would astonish any but a Seik"[1]

While Bhag Singh and Lal Singh were waiting shrewdly to strike a bargain for their services, Bhanga Singh and Gurdit Singh could obtain no specific promise of reward for their assistance The Phulkian chiefs were in constant correspondence with Holkar,[2] and the Resident got the impression from their conduct that recent British success had made them temporise "I imagine" he informed the Commander-in Chief 'they will not take any active part against their brethern till they see some powerful force detached to that quarter, which shall force the Seiks to retire by attacking their own possessions" He therefore suggested that to attack them in their own territories was the best way of drawing them from the Doab If Birch could move from Panipat, Harcourt might join him from Hapur and with the support of the Sikh cavalry, a British detachment could force its way to the Sutlej[3]

During the Sikh depredations in the Doab, Ranjit Singh was reported to be daily increasing his cavalry with a view to subdue all the chiefs on the other side of the Sutlej[4] The British considered it useless to ask him for help But on 18 December, intelligence was received that he had crossed the Sutlej with a considerable force of cavalry boping to take possession of Ludhiana, towards the west of Patiala Holkar was sending him repeated invitations to come further south and the Resident at Delhi at one time thought, that he might be tempted to do so thinking that the British possessions were vulnerable[5] Sahib Singh of

1 *Ibid* para 4
2 Lake to Ochterlony 2 February 1804—(P) 2 1
3 Ochterlony to C-in-C 7 December 1804—BSPC (I) 31 January 1805 C231
4. *Ibid* C230.
5. Ochterlony to Government 18 December 1804—BSPC(I) 31 January, 1805 C 53

Patiala was getting nervous at his approach, for, on 8 December, the Lahore ruler had taken possession of Phagwara He sent frantic appeals secretly to the Resident for assistance, for he was afraid of an open rupture with the Maharaja[1] On 14 December, the Patiala news-writer confirmed the raja's alarm and informed the Resident at Delhi that it was the intention of Ranjit Singh to take possession of Sahib Singh's country Sahib Singh was sending a *vakil* to obtain the aid of the British Government[2] The British took no notice of these supplications, for Sahib Singh was considered "very weak in judgement if not mad,"[3] and the Government did not want to quarrel with Ranjit Singh on his account

Bhag Singh and Lal Singh still lingered on at Panipat The Resident wrote to them again to join Col Burn, promising them an adequate reward for acting against the hostile Sikh forces[4] But instead of relieving Burn, the crafty sardars replied that they were on their way to visit him at Delhi[5] Their intention obviously was to arrange matters for their own interest before taking any active part against the Sikhs who were ravaging the Doab On 17 December, they arrived at the Residency full of excuses for the delay, and the Resident obtained the impression that their strange behaviour would last till the result of the operations at Dig was fully known[6] Their conduct appeared both dilatory and deceitful and on the morning of the 20th, Ochterlony told them the plain truth.[7] After "many frivolous and some reasonable excuses," mixed with protestations of fidelity, the sardars positively promised to join Burn and to use every endeavour to effect the immediate expulsion of the Sikhs For their services they demanded the *sanadas* of both Karnal and Jinjanna, as also the territories of the Ladwa chief Gurdit Singh[8] The Resident was amazed at their mercenary behaviour He

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1 Ochterlony to Lake 20 December 1804—*op cit* C239 (Enclosure from Sahib Singh)

2 *Patiala Intelligence* (14 December 1804)—Enclosure from Ochterlony to Government, 20 December, 1804—*op cit* C240

3 Ochterlony to Lake, 20 December 1804 *op cit* C239

4 *Ibid* 8 December 1804—BSPC(I) 31 January, 1805 C232

5 Ochterlony to Wellesley, 15 December, 1804, *op cit* C236

6 Ochterlony to Government, 18 December, 1804 *op cit* C238

7 Ochterlony to Lake, 20 December, 1804, *op cit* C239

8 *Ibid*, para 2

tried to put them off with a vague assurance that they might be favoured with a grant of Gurdit Singh's territories minus Jinjanna, which was situated in the Doab He further told them to be sensible to the fact that they had already received much and had done little The chiefs had a ready reply to the accusation They urged the inequality of their force, narrated their late services at Panipat, their rejection of Holkar's tempting offers, and in proof of their good faith, produced copies of Holkar's *sanads* giving away their territories to others [1]

The Jind and Kaithal rajas took leave of the Resident with strong assurances of complying with his wishes, but they did not hasten to join Burn By underhand means, they tried in vain to bribe the confidential servants of the Resident, and through them, the Resident himself [2] Ultimately they left Delhi on 25 December, after Ochterlony had given them repeated assurances of recommending Karnal or some other concessions as a reward for their services [3]

Bhag Singh and Lal Singh could not join Col Burn's camp at Kandola, where he had moved from Deoband until 26 January, 1805 [4] Burn had already surprised the Sikhs at Saharanpur In a swift and decisive action on 18 December, he had completely routed the Sikh forces Sikh hands quickly dispersed and immediate measures were taken to punish those Cis-Sutlej chiefs—Gurdit Singh of Ladwa, Bhanga Singh of Thanisar and others, who had fought against the British in alliance with the Marathas Moreover, the movements of the retreating bands of Sikh troops were to be watched From Kandola Burn's detachment moved to Mirpur, accompanied by the Jind and Kaithal sardars, who now expressed a desire to return to their own country, on the pretext that disturbances had broken out Burn, however, considered that it would be better if the chiefs could remain at his camp [5]

The Sikhs were now at Tanda and Burn informed the Resident at Delhi that he had no further need of the services of the

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1 *Ibid*

2 Ochterlony to Lake (no date but refers to the meeting of 20 December)—BSPC(I) 31 January, 1805 C237

3 Ochterlony to Wellesley 25 December 1804 *op cit* C141

4 Burn to Ochterlony, 30 January, 1805—(P) 2 13

5 *Ibid* 24 February 1805—(P) 2 18

Saharanpur detachment uoder Major-General Smith to preveot Amir Khan re-crossing the Ganges[1] Information regarding the territories aod forces of the Sikh chiefs was collected;[2] the Commander-in Chief, having granted an amoesty to all the Sikh chiefs except Ladwa, with whom a different hoe of conduct was to he followed[3]

12 Measures against Ladwa

Operations against the recalcitrant Ladwa chief were immediately takeo in hand Buro's detachment moved towards Karnal where Gurdit Singh was contemplatiog making a staod, aod Burn thought that a siege of the fort might he necessary for its reductioo But soon Gurdit Siogh's *vakil* arrived in Burn's camp to ask for terms The latter, however, declioed to treat with him until Karnal surrendered[4] Karnal fell readily into the hands of the British, but Gurdit Singh fled to Ladwa[5] A small detachment invested Azimabad, which had been seized a few months earlier hy the Ladwa chief from Gul Sher Khan On 9 April, the fort fell and was handed over to Gul Sher Khan along with the city of Tirawari[6]

Roy Singh of Jagadhari was willing to come to terms hut the attitude of Gurdit Singh required stern measures The terms which were communicated to him conditionally, provided *inter alia* for the relioquishmeot of his claim to the pargannas of Karnal and Jinjaooa[7] Burn reported to the Resideot ot Delhi that Roy Siogh of Jagadhari, Bhanga Siogh of Thanisar aod Bhag Singh of Chichrauli were treacherous and solicited instructions regarding the terms to he imposed upon them[8] The Ladwa sardar, however, refused to accept the terms offered to him[9] Burn, therefore, declioed to treat further with him Gurdit Singh now realised that his continued ohstinacy would do him oo good aod sent his *vakil* to Karnal, renouncing his claim to the disputed villages and

1 *Ibid* 8 March, 1805—(P) 2 19
2 *Ibid* 2 March, 1805—(P) 2 21
3 *Ibid* 27 March, 1805—(P) 2 21
4 *Ibid* 5 April, 1805—(P) 2 23
5 *Ibid* 6 April, 1805—(P) 2 26
6 *Ibid* 9 and 10 April, 1805—(P) 2 [illegible]
7 *Ibid* 23 April, 1805—(P) 2 35
8 *Ibid* 27 April, 1805—(P) 2 4[illegible]
9 *Ibid*

assuring the British commander that he was prepared to sign the agreement[1] The validity of his claim to certain villages was accepted and Bakht Singh, the *vakil* returned bringing his master's ratification of the treaty[2]

Bhag Singh and Lal Singh had been the cause of the ruin of the Ladwa chief They had persuaded Burn to offer him stringent terms in the hope that they would secure his territories as a grant from the British Government They succeeded in the first object, but Karnal and Jinjanna were never granted to them[3]

13 "Wild Propositions

During the Sikh disturbances in the Jumna-Sutlej Doab, David Ochterlony, the Resident at Delhi was vitally concerned with safeguarding British interests in this region His despatches to the Chief Secretary and the Governor-General show that he had been carrying on diligent enquiries into the character and conduct of the Sikhs for over 14 months[4] In his relations with the Cis Sutlej and Trans-Jumna states, he complained that the absence of any definite orders from Calcutta hampered him and made him drift towards an inconsistent and elusive policy There existed a remote threat of an engagement with Ranjit Singh, or alternatively, of the expediency of taking Sahib Singh of Patiala and other Sikh chiefs under British protection to save them from the violence of the former The Sikh chiefs who had appeared in arms against the British were to be punished, and those who remained neutral during the Anglo-Maratha hostilities, were to be rewarded

For these obvious reasons, the Resident at Delhi submitted to the Government propositions, which he himself feared, would be considered as "wild, extravagant and futile" Writing to

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1 Burn to Ochterlony, 1 May, 1805—(P) 2 43

2 *Ibid* 9 May, 1805—(P) 2 47

3 Bhag Singh was very keen to obtain possession of Karnal In 1809, he expressed a desire to exchange Ludhiana for it, but the British Government did not agree to it

4 These observations on British policy towards the Sikhs are based on Ochterlony's despatches to the Government, 7 November 20 November and 18 December, 1804—BSPC(I) 31 January, 1805. Ochterlony to Wellesley, 8, 15 and 25 December, 1805 - BSPC(I) 31 January, 1805 and on Chief Secretary Lumsden's Minute—BSPC(I) 31 January, 1805 C243

Marquis Wellesley on 7 December, 1804, he proposed that the British Government might annex in the name of the Mughal emperor, the whole country up to the banks of the Sutlej without great expense[1]

His second proposition was not only chimerical but also stupid It consisted of the assignment of the country in question to the four Sikh chiefs of Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Kaithal, whom he considered as possessing a paramount influence in the region, and subjecting the whole body of the Sikhs to a tribute formerly exacted from them by the Marathas

Both these suggestions were open to objections the former would have amounted to sheer robbery and the latter would have necessitated the employment of a permanent military force in the region to exact the tribute The sardars would never have paid it willingly and regretted the British connection which they were so eager to solicit In plain words, what Ochterlony proposed to the Governor-General was a more decided exercise of British paramountcy in the region

14 Lumsden's *Minute*

Ochterlony's suggestions did not prove acceptable to those in authority at Calcutta It was, however, considered necessary to outline a definite policy with regard to the Sikhs in general, and in particular, to the country beyond the Jumna The Chief Secretary Lumsden composed an excellent *Minute* on the subject, which conveyed to the Resident the views of the Government on the latter's suggestions[2] It was considered that the proposed subjection of the territory to British authority was both unjust and inexpedient It would amount to an annexation which the Government of India was not prepared to undertake The British policy in the region was limited to the secure and tranquil possession of the territory in the Doab and the right bank of the Jumna ceded to it by the treaty with Sindhia, or any territory which might be acquired in the course of existing

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1 Ochterlony to Wellesley, 7 December, 1804—BSPC(I) 31 January, 1805 C230

2 The policy of the Government based on this *Minute* was communicated to the Resident in Government to Ochterlony, 13 January, 1805—BSPC(I) 31 January, 1805, C243.

hostilities with Holkar nnd the raja of Bharatpur. For these reasons, every proposition for a permanent arrangement with the Sikhs occupying the territories between the Jumna nnd the Sutlej should be viewed with referenee to that limitation.[1]

With regard to the suggestion that the Cis-Sutlej Sikh chiefs he reduced to British tributaries, the Governor-General-in-Council regarded the proposal as one which would hardly eounterbalance the inconvenience attendant upon it. The exaetion of tribute—as an instrument of control, would only be advantageous so far as it would diminish the resources of the Sikhs nnd augment those of the British, but the use of a military foree to eollect such tribute would be too expensive The method would hardly provide any substantial additional revenue to the Government of India

Both these suggestions were duhhed impraetieahle,[2] eontrary to the principles of Puhlic Law,[3] sehemes of unwarrnntable aggrandisement,[4] and against the fundamental maxims of the British Government[5]

But under these high sounding platitudes, Lumsden did not try to conceal the reasons for this deeision The British Govern ment did not wish to have nny entanglements heyond the Jumna because the Sikhs were considered untrustworthy It, therefore, fought shy of any eonneetion with them Further, any British eontrol or influenee over the region would have required the presenee of British troops in the Doah Lumsden's observations on the general eharacter of the Sikh chiefs are harsh

How untrue was this general estimate of the Sikhs and the Cis Sutlej ehiefs is amply borne out by subsequent Anglo Sikh transactions during Holkar's intrusion into the Sikh eountry in 1805 6 At the time, however, it was eonsidered that any British connection with the Sikhs wonld besmirch the honourable and just principles which regulated the conduct of the British Government Any association with Ranjit Singh would involve it in a participation in his schemes of conquest Neither could the British Government afford to assist the raja of Patiala or any other Sikh chieftain against the power of the Lahore ruler In short, it was desirable to maintain a system of perfect neutrality

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1 *Ibid* para 5
2 *Ibid* para 7
3 *Ibid* para 9
4 *Ibid* para 13
5 *Ibid* para 14

CHAPTER IV

EXTENSION OF SIKH POWER, 1805–1808

1. Holkar's Intrusion

Holkar's irruption into the Punjab in 1805 marked the end of Maratha influence in the Cis-Sutlej region. It also brought the British into direct contact with the Sikh chiefs. Early in October, while the Maharaja was reducing the territories between the Chenab and the Indus, intelligence reached him that Holkar and his Rohilla ally Amir Khan had entered the Punjab.[1] Routed at Fatehgarh and Dig in December 1804, he looked northwards for succour, as the petty chiefs of Kalsia and Ladwa had led him to believe that the Cis-Sutlej sardars would help him against the British.[2] Trouble seemed to be brewing on the Cis-Sutlej frontier. At Patiala, where all the chiefs had assembled, Holkar received their assurances of sympathy, but he failed to win them over to his side.[3] Reports soon arrived that Lake's armies had approached Karnal. Bhag Singh and Lal Singh were keeping the Resident at Delhi informed of the transactions at Patiala; and Holkar, in the meantime, busied himself in levying exactions. Both he and his Rohilla ally reaped a rich harvest from the violent disagreement of Sahib Singh with his rani. Holkar observed to Amir Khan: "God has assuredly given us two pigeons to pluck; do you espouse the cause of the one, while I take up the other."[4]

On hearing the news of Lake's arrival at Panipat, both the refugees fled north in consternation. From Ludhiana, they entered the Jullundur Doab and ultimately arrived at Amritsar. Lake made a short stay at Patiala and after receiving the assurances of the Sikh chiefs, he advanced on 3 December, towards Ludhiana in the company of the Jind raja and finally halted on the bank of the Beas on 9 December, 1805.[5] From here, he sent Bhag Singh as an emissary to the Maharaja, who had reached Amritsar, to persuade his nephew not to assist Holkar.

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1 UT, ii, 57. For details, mostly sketchy, *vide*. Prinsep, p. 57; Griffin, p. 170; Elphinstone, ii, p. 325 and Cunningham, p. 128.

2. Lake to Ochterlony, 2 February, 1804—(P) 2:1.

3. Burn to Ochterlony, 12 October, 1805—(P) 2:57.

4. *Memoirs of Amir Khan*, p. 276.

5. *The Punjab States Gazetteers*, xvii A, p. 47.

2. Ranjit Singh and Holkar

Different versions are given as to what actually transpired between the Maratha and the Sikh. According to the Lahore Darbar Diarist, it appears that till the arrival of Lake's armies on the Beas, Ranjit Singh was extremely hospitable and sympathetic towards Holkar.[1] On arrival at Amritsar, Bhag Singh advised the Maharaja that it would be foolish and inexpedient to oppose the English Ranjit Singh accepted the advice and refused to help Holkar

Various other reasons are also ascribed to account for Ranjit Singh's changed attitude Cunningham suggests that he had demanded Maratha assistance against the Pathans of Kasur[2] Sinha remarks that a general assembly of the Sikhs met to decide the ultimate line of action[3] Chopra advances the argument, among others, that he dreaded the discipline of the English army and that the power of British arms influenced his judgment.[4] Griffin and Prinsep both agree that his uncle's influence prevented Ranjit Singh from assisting the Maratha and that "it was neither convenient nor wise to permit operation of the kind" in the Punjab[5] Latif's account is typical of a nineteenth century civil servant He further makes the ludicrous assertion that Ranjit Singh called a general assembly of the Sikhs which decided that the ruler of Lahore should interpose himself as mediator between the fugitive Maratha and the British Government.[6]

That the Maharaja's mind was in a state of acute indecision is certain When the news of his decision to forsake the Maratha for the British became known in the Sikh Camp, there were murmurs of resentment from the sardars that Bhag Singh had misled the Maharaja into adopting a course contrary to the principles of the Ksatriyas The Maharaja, they whispered, had allied himself with the *firangis* (the hated foreigners), who were the enemies of the faith[7] Once again, Ranjit Singh wavered He visited Holkar's camp and offered him presents When Holkar returned the visit, both of them repaired to the Golden Temple where they were often closeted together, discussing

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1 *Ibid*
2 p 129
3 *Ranjit Singh* Calcutta 1951 p 18
4 *The Punjab as a Sovereign State* p 50
5 *The Rajas of the Punjab* p 475 *Origin of the Sikh Power in the Punjab etc* p 58
6 *History of the Punjab* p 363
7 UT, *op cit*

plans and reviewing the military and financial aspects of a probable course of joint action[1] It appeared to Lake that the Maratha and Sikh might coalesce

But once more Bhag Singh intervened Ranjit Singh came to the conclusion that it would be expedient for him to come to terms with the British Though he himself ascribed his decision to an augury from the Holy Granth,[2] Ranjit Singh was shrewd enough to realise that Holkar's power had been broken and that it would be better for him to be on friendly terms with the British

Thus, chance or political wisdom or both saved the little kingdom of Lahore from ostensible destruction at its inception Immediately afterwards Ranjit Singh sent Sardar Fateh Singh Ahluwalia and Raja Bhag Singh to Lake's camp to communicate to him his decision When Holkar heard of this, he became desperate He had already sent a *vakil* to Shah Shuja, the Kabul Amir soliciting his aid He accused the Maharaja of breach of faith, observing that the Sikhs were a worthless and spiritless set of people "I have heard a great deal of your enterprise," he complained, 'but, found on coming among you that you have none If you won't join me against the British, I shall go to the Afghans and seek the aid of the foreigners" The Maharaja rejoined angrily "You talk tauntingly of the Sikhs, yet you are with an army of 100,000 men flying before the troops of Lord Lake, which hardly exceed 5,000"[3] The Maharaja was not impressed by the number of Maratha forces, and he told Metcalfe in 1808 of their low morale[4]

3 Anglo Sikh Treaty 1806

Holkar looked in vain for help in all directions Neither the Cis Sutlej sardars nor the ruler of Lahore were prepared to compromise their future by linking up their fate with a forlorn cause His threat to solicit Afghan aid was nothing more than a bluff, and on 24 December, 1805, he accepted the moderate terms offered to him by Lake and agreed to quit the Punjab In the meantime, Bhag Singh and Fateh Singh had prepared the ground for the first Anglo Sikh treaty, which was concluded on 1 January, 1806 Sardar Fateh Singh signed for himself and as plenipotentiary on the part of Ranjit Singh Lieut Col.

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1 *Ibid* p 58

2 Wade to Government 1 August 1827—PC(I) 12 October, 1827 C3 para 48

3 *Ibid* Holkar s army is estimated differently by historians Latif—15 000 Kanhaya Lal—40 000 and Amarnath—200 000 1

4 Metcalfe to Edmonstone (No 17)—BSPC(I) 17 October, 1808 C13

John Malcolm represented the East India Company By this agreement, the Sikh signatories bound themselves to compel Holkar to remove his army to a distance of 30 coss from Amritsar immediately and not to have any further connection with him The British Government, in return agreed not to enter the territories of the Sikh chieftains as long as they abstained from any intercourse with its enemies [1] The vagueness of this friendly alliance" is the chief feature of this agreement The British official Report on the *Countries West of the Jumna* mentions it without considering it of any political importance in the establishment of an intimate contact between the British Government and the Sikhs [2]

4 The Malwa Expeditions

The policy of cautious neutrality practised by the British soon gave an opportunity to Ranjit Singh to dominate the Cis Sutlej area Invited by Bhag Singh of Jind, to assist his ally Jaswant Singh of Nabha in the recovery of a village named Doladhi about 1½ miles distant from Nabha which Sahib Singh of Patiala had seized, the Maharaja had a good reason for crossing the Sutlej and for extending his influence in the Manjha and Malwa [3] Ranjit Singh's first Malwa expedition was swift and sweeping Diverting his forces from a march against raja Sansar Chand of Kangra, he crossed the Sutlej at Ludhiana and plundered Nakodar His forces were estimated at 30 000 horse and Sardars Fateh Singh Ahluwalia and Gurdit Singh of Ladwa accompanied him [4] He restored Doladhi to Nabha and exacted a heavy tribute from Sahib Singh The rajas of Nabha and Jind offered him the customary *nazarana*, and on his way back, he wiped out the Muhammadan ruling family of Ludhiana and seized Dakha, Jagraon and Ghumgrana These territories were bestowed upon his followers and those of the local Sikh sardars who were willing to accept his suzerainty [5]

Ranjit Singh s irruption into the Cis Sutlej territories, however, was viewed with apparent complacency by the British, who considered the Sikhs disunited and involved in intecine strife Though it was

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1 *Vide* Appendix No 1

2 HMS(I)—Vol 506A *fol* 1-23

3 Marshall to Seton 3 November 1806—(P) 2 63 Ball to Seton 4 November, 1806 and D ck to Seton (same date)—(P) 2 64 66

4 Seton to Edmonstone 30 O tober 1806—BSPC(I) 20 November 1806 C1

5 UT ii p 60 *ff* The Lahore Diarist gives full account of the first Malwa expedition

realised that Ranjit Singh had acquired considerable ascendency over the Sikhs, yet British relations with him were of a feeble nature[1] The Patiala-Nahha quarrel appeared to be a local contest[2] Furtber, the Jind and Nabba rulers had assured tbe Resident at Delbi that Ranjit Singb had been invited hy them to settle the affair[3] His transactions therefore did not alarm the British The Resident was, however, kept fully informed of his movements in the Cis-Sutlej area hy the Jind raja and the British military commanders at Karnal Rewari and Saharanpur[4] It was reported that the Labore ruler was ambitious and desirous of acquiring territory across the Sutlej, but the line which he might ultimately adopt, depended upon the petty Sikh cbiefs The Patiala ruler, hard pressed to resist him might apply to the Britisb for mediation or military aid, wbicb in Seton s opinion should not be granted[5] But on 4 November, alarming reports poured in that the Maharaja was moving towards the Ganges under the pretence of performing ablutions in tbat river, and that his real intention was to plunder sucb of tbe Britisb possessions as were most exposed[6] The Buria chief Bhagwan Singb urged tbe Resident to take measures for protecting tbe upper part of tbe Doab Bbagwan Singh was told tbat tbe British Government bad no differences with Ranjit Singb, and tbat so far as be was concerned, it had no apprebensions of any bostile intention on bis part[7]

All douhts regarding any anxiety sbown by the Britisb at bis advance towards Amhala and Thanisar were set at rest by Ranjit Singh in a communication to the Resident Justifying his recent incursion into the Malwa country to settle the dispute hetween Nahha and Patiala, be assured the Resident in the following words "Keep yourself at ease , the ties of friendship and union hetween tbe Hon ble Company and me have been firmly established through the medium of General Lord Lake and my uncle aforesaid I am particularly

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1 Metcalfe s *Memoir of Hindoostan West of the Jumna in 1805*—HMS(I) Vol 506A

2 Seton to Edmonstone 30 October 1806 *op cit* para 1

3 Bhag Singh and Jaswant Singh to Res dent, 3 November 1806—BSPC(I) C8-9

4 Ball to Seton 4 November 1806 Bagshawe to Seton 5 November 1806 and Dick to Seton 5 November 1806—(P) 2 64 65 66

5 Seton to Edmonstone 30 October 1806 BSPC(I) 20 November 1806 C1, para 6

6 *Ibid* 4 November 1806 *op cit* C13

7 *Ibid* para 5

attached to you In consequence my heart is frequently seeking for accounts of your welfare Considering my house to be your own, make me happy with friendly letters and favor me with your commands; it will delight my heart to receive them "[1]

In 1807, Ranjit Singh made a second incursion into the Cis-Sutlej region Invited by the artful and ambitious rani Aus Kaur of Patiala for intercession on behalf of her infant son with the raja, he marched to Patiala, settled the matter arbitrarily, and after collecting the promised reward, he attacked Naraingarh and seized the territories of the Sikh Dallewala chief in the Doab [2]

During these two campaigns, Ranjit Singh had reaped a rich harvest These conquests remained practically unnoticed by the British Government till 1809, when Ochterlony submitted his report on the Sikh Country [3] Lulled by Ranjit Singh's assurances, the Government had accepted the Resident's view that the proceedings of the ruler of Lahore would in no way effect the tranquillity of the Doab [4] It is, however, proper to form an estimate of his territorial acquisitions, which were freely bestowed upon the chiefs of the region, for later, the question of their restitution baffled British officials An area with an annual revenue of 400,518 rupees, comprising the *pargannas* of Ludhiana and part of Rahimabad, Sirhind, Tahara, Boorna, Pyub and Rahon, and the *ta'aluqas* of Ghumgrana, Shergarh, Dharamkot, Jagrann, Jhandput, Kot, Chandpur, Talwandi and Dhanaur were taken possession of by him

5 Distribution of Spoils

The distribution of spoils was as follows Sahib Singh of Patiala received nothing The Jind ruler obtained 90 villages, yielding an annual revenue of 41,700 rupees, in the *pargannas* of Ludhiana, Sirhind and the *ta'aluqas* of Jhandiala, Kot, Jagraon, Busia and Ghumgrana Jaswant Singh of Nabha received 38 villages, yielding an annual revenue of 30,040 rupees, in the *ta'aluqas* of Kot, Busia, Jagraon and Ghumgrana Gurdit Singh of Ladwa gained 32 villages in the *ta'aluqas* of Baddowal and Jagraon, worth 23,540 rupees annually Fateh Singh Ahluwalia received 106 villages in the *ta'aluqas*

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1 Ranjit Singh to Resident—BSPC(I) 2 November, 1806 C1.
2. UT, II, 65-66
3. Ochterlony to Edmonstone—BSPC(I) 29 July, 1809 C3 and 4
4 Edmonstone to Seton 19 November, 1806—BSPC(I) C12.

of Dhaka, Kot, Busia, Jagraon and Tolwandi, yielding an annual revenue of 40,505 rupees Diwan Muhkam Chand received 102 villages in the *ta'aluqas* of Zira, Kot Kapura and Dharamkot, worth 68,900 rupees annually Garhha Singh obtained 62 villages yielding an annual revenue of 22,634 rupees in the *ta'aluqa* of Dharamkot Karam Singh Nagla received 36 villages in the *ta'aluqa* of Ghumgrana, worth 23,415 rupees Other smaller beneficiaries were Basant Siogh, who received a grant of villages worth 6 914 rupees , Attar Singh, 4,010 rupees , Jodh Singh Runsia, 42 000 rupees and Jodh Singh Kalsia, 10,000 rupees Wadoi was annexed and bestowed upon rani Sada Kaur, the Maharaja's mother in-law as a grant on payment of 15 000 rupees [1]

6 Growth of Ranjit Singh s Power

Practically unnoticed by the British, during these two expeditions, Ranjit Singh had established *de facto* suzerainty over the Sikh sardars ond petty chiefs of Malwa and Sirhind The Phulkian chiefs offered him the customary *nazarana* in token of allegiance , the chiefs of Molerkotla, Kaithal, Buria, Shahahad, Kalsia and the rani of Amhala paid him trihute The grants made to the Cis Sutlej rulers carried specific conditions and the acceptance of the supreme power of the Lahore Government ,[2] ond in 1800, during Metcalfe's negotiations with Ranjit Singh, a claim of Lahore suzerainty over all the Cis Sutlej chiefs was hased on them

At first, the British took no notice of the transactions of the Maharaja in the Cis-Sutlej area His rise to power, his military strength and his virtnal dominance over the Sikh country between the Jumna and the Sutlej was a surprise for Metcalfe, when he came as an envoy to the Lahore Darhar in Septemher 1808. Ranjit Singh's demand that the British Government should ocknowledge his sovereigoity over the whole Sikh country was never considered hy Metcalfe as a mere pretension and he recommended that declaration to this effect would not make much differeoce as the Maharaja had virtually made himself the overlord

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1 *Statement of Conquests and Grants of Rajah Ru ıjeet Singh*—Ochterlony to Edmonstone—BSPC(1) 29 July 1809 C3 and 4

2 Murray to Metcalfe 8 January 1826—(P) 72 474 Clerk to Metcalfe, 10 November 1835—(P) 81 130 The conditions of these grants came up for consideration when question for the adjustment of the territory arose between the states concerned and the Lahore Government.

of the region between the Sutlej and the Jumna and that his successive conquests had tended towards a complete subjugation of the whole area [1] Ochterlony's report on the resources, military strength and the conquests and grants of the Maharaja,[2] and Metcalfe's excellent paper on the Ludhiana Military Post,[3] revealed the growth of Ranjit Singh's power In 1803, reported Metcalfe, Ranjit Singh was a petty chief, even as late as 1806, when Lake with the British army was on the Beas, his power in the Cis-Sutlej region was confined to an area within 30 miles of Lahore Since then he had extended his possessions in the Punjab and had commenced encroachments on the left bank of the Sutlej He had also amassed treasures, collected his guns and formed his infantry troops In brief, after 1806, his power had substantially increased [4]

7 Stir in Malwa and Sirhind

Ranjit Singh's successive inroads into Malwa and Sirhind created a stir in the Sikh country The Phulkian chiefs and the Kaithal raja viewed with nervousness and alarm the pressure put upon them by the Lahore ruler Torn by petty jealousies and opportunists by tradition, they kept up the pretence of still being within the Khalsa, whose avowed leader was now Ranjit Singh The gradual liquidation of the trans Sutlej Misals and the unlimited ambition of Ranjit Singh made them extremely apprehensive of their own fate The new Commonwealth of Lahore was aggressive and the *Gurmattas* at Amritsar subservient to the will of the military despot, whose policy was territorial aggrandizement The Cis Sutlej chiefs, therefore, kept up a pretence of fidelity towards the new Sikh State, but it meant their ultimate extinction

8 Cis Sutlej Deputation to Delhi

Early in March 1808, the chiefs of Jind, Kaithal and the Diwan of Patiala met secretly at Samana, in the Patiala territory to decide what course they should adopt in view of the dangerous situation which had arisen After long discussions, it was decided that a deputation of the leading sardars should wait upon the British

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1 Metcalfe to Edmonstone (No 35)—BSPC(I) 28 November, 1808 C4 para 2.
2 HMS(I)—Vol 594 No 31
3 Metcalfe to Edmonstone 3 May, 1809—BSPC(1) 3 June 1809 C12
4 *Ibid* paras 43-44

Resident at Delhi to solicit British protection[1] The Maharaja's secret agents at Patiala had informed him of what had transpired at Samana The official Lahore Diarist describes these overtures with contempt The raja of Patiala and other Malwa sardars, he observes, were distressed at the extension of Lahore authority The exaction of *nazaranas* and the payment of tribute was considered by them as the end of their independence They appeared to be between the devil and the deep sea, and to escape extinction at the hands of the Maharaja, they had sent emissaries to the English to come to their side of the Sutlej and arrange their affairs. The British immediately took advantage of the opportunity and dispatched troops to take charge of affairs between the rivers Jumna and the Sutlej[2]

The India Office Records, however, give fuller details of the Sikh deputation to Delhi and what took place at the British Residency[3] Negotiations which took place at the Delhi Residency between the Sikh deputation and Archibald Seton, the Resident, are important, as they ultimately shaped British policy towards the Cis-Sutlej region On 15 March, 1808, the delegation composed of raja Bhag Singh of Jind, Lal Singh of Kaithal, Chain Singh the Patiala Diwan, and the sardars of Jagadhari and Radhour arrived at Delhi. Curiously enough, one Mohar Singh, described as a confidential agent of Ranjit Singh, had somehow or other invited himself to join it. The Sikh chiefs held many meetings with Archibald Seton, the Resident at Delhi but Mohar Singh's presence put a restraint on the sardars who feared to express themselves freely. On 20 March, however, the Maharaja's agent left Delhi and proceeded on a pilgrimage to Gaya

After the departure of Mohar Singh, the chiefs in an interview on 22 March, unburdened their minds They represented their uneasiness at Ranjit Singh's ambitions and expressed the hope that the British Government would interfere on their behalf and save them from extinction The sardars claimed their right to British protection in a curious, vague and loosely-worded document, which they submitted to the Resident[4] Briefly, they claimed that they and their ancestors had always sought protection from the power established at Delhi,

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1 Seton to Edmonstone, 3 April, 1808 BSPC (I) 18 April 1808 C8

2 UT, II, p 79 *sq*

3 Seton to Edmonstone, 3 and 18 April 1808 BSPC (I) 18 April, 1808 C8 and 9 Edmonstone to Seton 2 May 1808 BSPC (I) same date C18 (Enclosure)

4 *The Paper of Proposals* BSPC (I) 18 April, 1808 C9

because, it possessed the supreme legitimate authority in the Sikh country Such paramountcy had been exercised over them in the past, its latest example being the protection afforded to them by Perron against the inordinate ambition of George Thomas [1]

On behalf of the chief of Patiala, Chain Singh traced the historical connection of the Patiala family with the rulers of Delhi During Muhammad Shah's reign, he observed, when Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India, Ala Singh, the Patiala ruler had sided with the former, but when the Durrani invader had established his authority at Delhi, the raja submitted to him and was assigned the superintendency of Sirhind When Nawab Najib-ud Dawla became the master of Delhi on behalf of the King of Kabul, the Patiala forces aided him against Bharatpur After Ala Singh's death, his son Amir Singh was honoured by the King with the title of *rāja'i rājgān*. During the lifetime of Amir Singh, continued Chain Singh, the Sikh chiefs had become masters of the Punjab, but their relations with Delhi continued When he died, Patiala affairs fell into confusion on account of Sahib Singh's minority and the Sikh chiefs prayed upon Patiala territories Then Sindhia, who was the master of Delhi, exercised his paramountcy and on an appeal from the Sikh chiefs, Maratha forces were sent to the Sikh country to arrange their affairs More recently, when George Thomas threw the country between the Jumna and the Sutlej into confusion, an appeal was made to Perron, who settled the affairs in the region "This is clear as the Sun The Sikh chiefs submitted to Perron and his boundary was fixed at the Sutluge" [2]

Adverting to their relations with the British Government, the chiefs reminded the Resident that during George Thomas' disturbances, they had been honoured with *khil ats* by the Governor-General At that time, they did not solicit British aid for fear of Perron But when the British became masters of Delhi they placed their services at Lord Lake's orders and at Hendoun Beyona entered into a friendly agreement with him [3] During Holkar's visitation to the Manjha and Malwa countries, they had regulated their conduct correctly Lake was offered every assistance by them and Ranjit Singh advised to submit to the British Government Holkar was forced to make peace

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1 Seton to Edmonstone 3 April 1808 BSPC (I) 18 April 1808 C8.

2 BSPC (I) 18 April 1808 C9 para 3

3 *Ibid*, para 4

with the British, but inwardly, be nursed a grudge against them At their request Lord Lake plainly told him "that the places of Puttealeh, Jeend, K'heytul and Nabeh with all the country belonging to them, were under the protection of the British "[1]

This amazing assertion was made in a document handed over to the Resident on 22 March, who found after examination that it bore no signatures Discussions on the draft were carried on by the chiefs' *vakils* for two more days Curiously enough, the sardars said very little against their oppressor from whose late incursions they had benefitted profusely Ranjit Singh, they declared, was a chief of unreliable temper His intention was to subjugate their country , hence steps for self-preservation had become necessary for them[2] Finally, they assured the Resident that if protection were granted to them, they would remain loyal to the British for ever.[3]

9 British Response Evasive

Archibald Seton the Resident at Delhi, reacted to these arguments in an extraordinary manner He told the Sikh chiefs that the British Government had no quarrel with Ranjit Singh ; that their uneasiness was ill founded and that it was improbable that the Maharaja had any ambitious views towards their territories[4] In this reply, however, Seton was not merely being guided by the "neutral and non interfering system of Government "[5] Alarming reports of French intrigues in Persia had been reaching Calcutta from Bushire and Tehran , and to counteract them, the Government of India were seriously considering of sending embassies to Lahore and Kabul[6] The complaints of the Cis-Sutlej chiefs against Ranjit Singh were, therefore, considered inopportunate and ill-founded But at the final interview with the Sikh chiefs on 31 March, the Resident adopted quite a different approach to the subject The sardars anxiously enquired from him whether he had persued their written proposals Seton replied that he had They asked, "What then, have we to expect ?"

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1 Seton to Edmonstone 3 April 1808-BSPC(I) 18 April 1808 C8
2 *Paper of Proposals* BSPC (I) 18 April 1808 C9 para 5
3 *Ibid*
4 Seton to Edmonstone 3 April 1808-BSPC (I) 18 April 1808 C8, para 5
5 *Ibid* 18 April 1808 BSPC (I) 2 May 1808 C18 para 3
6 Edmonstone to Seton 4 April 1808 BSPC (I) 11 April 1808 C8 paras 7-8

The Resident replied that it did not rest with him to give an answer to a question of so important a nature, but that he could only explain the policy of his government in general He, however, agreed to convey their supplications to the Governor General At this point, Seton's mind began to visualise the advantage which could be taken of the dire need of the Cis-Sutlej states He sounded the chiefs on the financial and military aspects of their proposition, observing casually that the north western boundary of the British went no farther than Karnal, and that a compliance with their proposals might render it necessary to detach a military force to the Sutlej An Addendum to the *Proposals* was composed and after Seton's approval, was added to the document to which the sardars affixed their seals[1] By some extraordinary oversight, Seton forgot to ascertain who was going to pay for the British forces This omission in the document was regretted by him, but he reported to the Government, that the chiefs would willingly agree to defray the whole or part of the expenses if asked[2]

Seton's report to the Government earned him a sharp reproof for indirectly encouraging the chiefs to hope that their application would meet with British approval[3] The Government's reply to the chiefs, though in conformity with the general principles of the policy taking shape at the time, was both ambiguous and evasive It did not raise the hopes of the sardars, whose continual stay at Delhi was being viewed by the Lahore Maharaja with ever-increasing suspicion Incidently, the Sikh proposals suggested to the British Government, a definite line of reasoning, which was Metcalfe's only recourse at Lahore during his mission, in proving to the Maharaja, the claim of British paramountcy over the region between the Sutlej and the Jumna

In response to the proposals, the Government agreed in principle that it had the right to consider the Sikh chiefs as under its authority But, it was pointed out to them that the British view of paramountcy was tempered with justice, for, it avoided all interference in their concerns Neither did it subject them to the payment of tribute[4]

10 Basis of British Policy

Shorn of all vagueness and ambiguity, this reply exhibited the true nature and extent of the connection which the British Government

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1 Seton to Edmonstone, 3 April 1808, *ut supra* paras 7-8
2 *Ibid* para 9
3 Edmonstone to Seton 2 May, 1808—BSPC(I) 2 May, 1808 C17
4 *Ibid*, C17 and 18

was prepared to maintain with the Sikh chiefs It was not prepared to enter into any arrangements by which it would be pledged to guarantee their possessions.[1] Thus the Cis-Sutlej sardars received no positive assurance from the British Government. A few months later, the phantom of a French invasion of India led the British to negotiate for their active co-operation and to seek alliances, not only beyond the Jumna but beyond the Sutlej and the Indus, in Lahore, Kabul and Tehran.

But if the Cis Sutlej states were left to themselves, early in 1808, the Indian Government dominated by an exaggerated apprehension of an European enemy, was desirous of establishing a closer contact with Ranjit Singh. When in March 1808, the Maharaja expressed a desire to visit Hardwar, it was considered expedient to establish contact with him Charles Metcalfe, an Assistant in the Delhi Residency, was placed on special duty at Hardwar to explore the possibility of a British agency at Lahore and also the practicability of the despatch of an embassy to Kabul through Lahore[2] The Maharaja, however, postponed his visit, which procedure gave offence to the British, and later, Lord Minto, the Governor-General complained about it to Ranjit Singh[3] Writing to Minto on 6 July, 1808, Ranjit Singh explained the reasons for the postponement of the visit and charged the Cis-Sutlej chiefs of Patiala, Nabha, Kaithal and Jind with misrepresenting to him the intentions of the British Government. He complained that these Sikh chiefs had sent him letters which had led him to suppose that the British Government was making preparations of war against him[4] They had further warned him that Archibald Seton, the Delhi Resident, had ordered troops to march against him, and that, if he came to Hardwar, he would do it at his own risk He also believed that at Hardwar a barricade with fourteen entrances had been constructed to entrap him![5] Ranjit Singh enclosed to the Governor General copies of letters received by him from the Sikh chiefs containing these and many other allegations[6]

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1 *Ibid*, CI8, para 3.

2 Seton to Metcalfe, 22 March, 1808—(P) 4 23, Edmonstone to Metcalfe, 20 June, 1808—BSPC(I) same date No 3, para 1

3 Minto to Rajah of Lahore, 20 June, 1808—HMS(I)-Vol 592 No 18

4 Runjeet Singh of Lahore to Lord Minto, 6 July, 1808—HMS(I)-Vol 592 No 22, para 2

5 *Ibid*, Enclosure 1

6 These copies are missing from the India Office Records-HMS(I)-Vol 592 No 22, but a gist of the letters is given in the Maharaja s Memorandum No 1 at the same place

The Government of India took cognisance of these allegations against the Cis Sutlej chiefs and the Resident at Delhi was ordered to make enquiries regarding the authenticity of the letters which the Maharaja asserted he had received from them [1] The matter, however, was soon forgotten It is uncertain whether the sardars had played a game of duplicity or the Maharaja wanted to prejudice the British against the chiefs who had sought protection from him.

11 Ranjit Singh s Proposal

A little earlier, Ranjit Singh had proposed a treaty of alliance with the British Government Writing to the Governor-General on 20 June, he conveyed his sentiments of friendship and enclosed a *Memorandum* containing his suggestions, which amounted to an offensive and defensive alliance, and a removal of misunderstanding created by the Cis-Sutlej chiefs [2]

Lord Minto replied to the Maharaja on 11 July, 1808 The British Government, he assured him, would afford a strong proof of its sincerity by despatching to his Court, a gentleman of rank, for the improvement of amicable relations between the two governments He also assured him that the idle reports which he had heard from the Sikh chiefs were false A vague reply was given to Ranjit Singh's proposals for a treaty with the assurance that he would receive ample satisfaction from verbal representations of the envoy being sent to his Court, who had powers to negotiate with him the points connected with the welfare of the two states [3]

1 Edmonstone to Seton 11 July, 1808—HMS(I) Vol 892 No 25, para 2
2 HMS(I) Vol 592 No 22 (Enclosure II)—*Ranjit Singh s Memorandum*
3. Minto to Ranjit Singh, 11 July, 1808 HMS(I), *op cit* , No 23, paras 1-2

CHAPTER V

THE FRENCH MENACE AND METCALFE'S MISSION TO LAHORE, 1808—1809

1 Reversal of Policy

Lord Minto's arrival in India in July 1807 marked the end of the policy of non interference in the Sikh country as outlined in the Lumsden's Minute of 13 January, 1805,[1] and followed successively by Wellesley, Cornwallis and Barlow Changed European diplomacy (1806-7) and the Franco-Persian treaty of May 1807 brought about a reversal of British foreign policy in India The general principles limiting the Company's dominions "to the secure and tranquil possession of the territories in the Doab and on the right banks of the Jumna" were unacceptable to Minto Ranjit Singh's incursions into the Cis Sutlej area in 1806-7 had convinced him that a temporary deviation from the policy of non intervention should be permitted The Lahore ruler's resolution to subjugate the states situated between the Sutlej and the Jumna, he wrote to the Secret Committee, had constituted a case for the imposition of British authority in the area The British Government should not have declared the Sikh chiefs independent of its control in the year 1806, it should have attended to their united solicitation for protection during Ranjit Singh's second incursion in 1807 The denial of British protection to the Cis Sutlej states had encouraged Ranjit Singh to make successive inroads into the region[2]

2 Francophobia

Departure from the Government of India's policy of non-intervention was also considered essential on account of the changed international situation Opinions differ as to how far the Franco-Russian agreement at Tilsit in 1807 and Gardanne's mission to Persia constituted a potential threat of a French invasion of India The Indian Government, however, considered the "mighty schemes" of the "French Usurper" and the "Russian Autocrat" as substantially real

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1 BSPC (I) 31 January 1805 C 243

2 Governor General to Secret Committee 31 March 1808—BISL (I) Vol 10

Looked at now, it appears that it had no clear perception of the matter and that Minto's policy was based on mere conjecture The French menace in 1807-8 was overestimated by British statesmen in India It is, however, important to realise that the measures adopted to counteract it led not only to the reversal of British policy in the Trans-Jumna region but also to the adoption of a decidedly more vigorous attitude towards the Sikhs

The growth of French intrigues and influence in Persia had also alarmed the Home Government, which considered it as a threat to the safety of British possessions in India[1] In September 1807, the Secret Committee sent information to the Governor-General that the French Government was about to turn its attention to the invasion of India[2] It was, therefore, considered necessary to take immediate steps to counteract the menace These included the formation of connections with the countries eastward of Lahore and with the chiefs and other states in the Punjab, for resisting any invasion from the direction of Persia The Government of India was, however, cautioned against any interference in the internal concerns of these states or any defensive arrangements, which might involve them in future contests

These instructions were received by Lord Minto in May 1808. Intelligence of French intrigues at the Persian Court had also reached the Government of India An Armenian agent at Tehran had sent an account of the confidential transactions of the French embassy in Persia[3], an ex-Ambassador of the Shah had secretly informed the Resident at Bushire of the nature and extent of the French demands and of the Shah's disposition to accede to them Added to these were the numerous official despatches of Sir John Malcolm, the British Ambassador in Persia, to the Government of India regarding the state of affairs in Persia which hinted at the possibility of French designs on India[4]

3 Bogey of French designs

A close examination of these reports, however, shows that they

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1 The background to the British policy is based on the Secret Committee's *Memorandum* (No 81) HMS (I), Vol 511, *fol* 33 *sq*. Governor General's *Minute*, 17 June 1808 BSPC(I) 10 June, 1808 C2 Elmonstone to Resident Delhi and Metcalfe 20 June, 1808 BSPC (I), *op cit*, C3 and 4 and Metcalfe's Personal Memoranda (no date) Kaye, 1 210 *ff*

2 Secret Committee—*Memorandum* (No 80) HMS (I), Vol 511 *fol* 33 *sq*.

3 Government to Metcalfe, 20 June, 1808 BSPC(I), same date, C3, para 17

4 For Malcolm's despatches to Lord Minto *vide*. BSPC(I) 15 and 19 August, 1808 Vol 208, C1 to C12, 16 and C26 to C35

differed widely in their estimate of the French designs on India If they had anything in common, it was a tendency to overstress the danger from French activities in Persia The Government of India's ready acceptance of these "bit bits of information" described by Thompson as "a handful of mist" seems amazing The intelligence obtained from these documents was considered as confirmed from "other sources of information" There was, therefore, no doubt of their accuracy Actually, no precise information about a threat to India can be gleaned from them Some reports stated that the French proposed to aid the Shah of Persia to conquer Afghanistan and subsequently invade India *via* Kabul and the Punjab Others contended that the French would prosecute the projected invasion of India by the southern route of Sind and Gujrat Lord Minto's Government, however, thought it reasonable to believe that they would try to penetrate India both by the northern and southern routes [1] On 2 February, Lord Minto informed the Secret Committee that though the French projects directed against India looked impracticable—there being numerous obstacles in the way of a French march through Persia and Afghanistan into India, yet the Government of India deemed its duty to act on the supposition of its practicability and adopt measures to counteract it [2]

Thus the growing belief in the practicability of a French invasion made the governmental machinery move in a predetermined groove In March 1808, the Governor-General signified his intention to the Secret Committee, of despatching envoys to Lahore, Kabul and Sind for the purpose of uniting their rulers with the British [3] On 26 September, he informed them that he had given orders for the advance of a British force to the Indus and beyond it [4]

4 Lahore and Kabul Missions

On 20 June, Minto laid his plan before the Board for the immediate despatch of missions to Lahore and Kabul—Charles Metcalfe was selected for the former and Mountstuart Elphinstone for the latter Information which had been previously gained regarding the States of Lahore and Kabul, warranted the belief that the proposed embassies

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1 Minto's *Minute* 17 June, 1808 BSPC (I) 20 June, 1808 C2

2 Governor General to Secret Committee 2 February, 1808 BISL(I)

3 *Ibid* 31 March 1808 *op cit*, also Secret Committee *ut supra fol* 34

4 Governor General to Secret Committee 26 September 1808-BISL(I) Vol 11 *fol* 327, para 4 *sq*

would be well received[1] The Government did not lose sight of the Sikh-Afghan hostility, and to prevent the possibility of the Lahore ruler refusing to allow Elphinstone's mission to the Amir of Afghanistan a passage through the Punjab, it was first proposed to combine the two missions and to send Metcalfe both to Lahore and Kabul. The idea was however dropped, as the dual role of the envoy would have injured the pride of the Amir of Afghanistan, who it was presumed, still regarded the raja of Lahore more as a vasssal than an independent prince[2] For this reason, it was also decided to equip the Lahore mission on a scale inferior to that intended for Kabul[3] According to these arrangements, Metcalfe was to precede Elphinstone and to arrange for the latter's passage through the Punjab and establish a preliminary intercourse with Kabul which might facilitate his favourable reception by the Amir

But in this, the Government of India had under-estimated the Sikh Chief's hostility towards the Afghans Ranjit Singh was strongly opposed to the intended mission to Kabul and intimated to Metcalfe his determination to oppose its progress[4] The envoy, therefore, dropped the idea of sending agents to Kabul,[5] and a British agent Srinivas Rao, who attempted the journey was actually arrested by the Lahore authorities[6] The Maharaja also gained the impression that Metcalfe's mission was eventually bound for the Amir's court[7] He used the Kabul mission as a counter for bargaining and demanded that it should start for Afghanistan *via* Bahawalpur and Sind after the British Government had conceded his demands[8] The envoy pointed out in vain that the approaching French invasion would compel the Maharaja to come to terms with the Afghans, but he replied, that when that distant time arrived, he would be glad to accommodate his differences with the State of Kabul Till that day arrived, it was essential for him to carry out his operations against Bahawalpur, Multan and

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1 BSPC (I)—Secret and Separate Department Vol 207, No 3 para 12

2 *Ibid* paras 19 20

3 *Ibid* It seems that these instructions were followed literally and Metcalfe's equipment was made so infe ior that on arrival at the Maharaja's Camp at Jasur he found his escort's clothing in a ragged and disreputable condition *Vide* Metcalfe to Edmonstone 13 September, 1808—BSPC(I) 3 October 1808, C15.

4 Secret Committee, (No 60) HMS (I) Vol 511 *fol* 30

5 Metcalfe to Edmonstone—No 27 BSPC (I) 27 October, 1808, C2

6 *Ibid* No 23 BSPC (I) 24 October, 1808, C69

7 *Ibid* No 19 BSPC (I) 17 October 1808, C18.

8 *Ibid* No 20 BSPC (I) 17 October 1808, C19

Peshawar.[1] It looked as if the British mission would founder on the rocks of Kabul.

5 Metcalfe outwitted

The main purpose of the Lahore Mission was to engage the ruler of Lahore in a defensive alliance against any invasion of India,[2] but the scale of Metcalfe's embassy seems to have been quite inadequate for such a purpose The Maharaja was to be told that a French army would soon approach the Indus and that it would be in his own interest to co-operate with the formidable British force, which he prepared to advance towards that river to oppose it[3] His co-operation was to be urged upon the basis of his own security and because in the event of a French invasion, his country, without British help, would be subjected to devastation and ruin[4] He should, therefore, be persuaded to consent to the march of a British army through the Punjab and to acquiesce in the establishment of British supply depots in his territory[5] These propositions, the envoy soon discovered, were met by the most striking display of jealousy and suspicion by Ranjit Singh. The Sikh ruler seems to have diagnosed the political situation more accurately than the Government of India Metcalfe's elaborate oration about the French menace did not impress the Maharaja[6] The danger if any, appeared to him far too remote to be real, and as the negotiations progressed, Metcalfe received the impression that Ranjit Singh considered it a cloak to cover the ambitious designs of the British on his territory[7] To the envoy's proposals for joint action against the French invasion, he demanded that the British Government should first acknowledge him as the head of the Sikh nation[8] A rude Sikh Jat could hardly be expected to be well versed in international politics. His astuteness, however, made him assent in general terms to the propositions made by Metcalfe to counteract

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1 *Ibid* No 26 BSPC (I) 31 October 1808 C2

2 Secret Committee *ut supra, fol* 81

3 Edmonstone to Metcalfe 20 June 1808—BSPC (I) same date, C3 para 36

4 Ibid paras 35-36

5 *Metcalfe s Personal Memoranda op cit*, 1, 249

6 Secret Committee, *ut supra, fol* 81 The Rajah and his ministers manifested an entire ignorance (whether real or pretended is doubtful) of the designs of the French '

7 Metcalfe to Edmonstone, No 23—BSPC (I) 24 October, 1808 C69

8 *Ibid* Rajit Singh s draft art 3

the common danger,[1] but he later made counter-proposals, without the acceptance of which, there would be no treaty. These included the British acceptance of his suzerainty over the Sutlej-Jumna region and non interference in his aggressive schemes against the territories subject to the Afghan rule.[2]

Demands similar to these had been anticipated, and Metcalfe had been cautioned not to accept them but meet them "by arguments".[3] A non committal attitude was particularly to be adopted with regard to the Maharaja's aggressive plans against the territories of the Sikh chiefs between the Sutlej and the Jumna. The Government was prepared to accede only to arrangements of a strictly defensive nature, though its was unkoown, how far it might go, if the danger of a foreigo invasion should continue undimimished.[4]

6 Metcalfe's Grandiose Schemes

Seldom perhaps in Anglo-Indian diplomatic annals, was so delicate a task entrusted to so young in years. At the age of 23, Charles Metcalfe had already won the approbation of the Governmeat as 'ao excellent public servant," and his appointment to lead the missioo to Lahore sbowed that the Governor-General reposed great confidence in his character, ability and local knowledge for the purpose.[5] He had served as an Assistant to the Resident at Delhi and had access to the political correspondence with the Sikh states. He combined this knowledge with the information gained at first hand during his negotiations with Ranjit Singh in composing his official despatches to the Government of India. Consequeotly his voluminous despatches from Ranjit Singh's Court exhibit a rare diplomatic skill in grasping the true character and resources of the Sikb country, the political military and financial state of the State of Lahore, the character of Ranjit Singb, the exteot of his ambitions and dominioos; the nature of his relatioos with other states, his habits, prejudices and caprices and finally, his real dispositioo towards the British Governmeot.

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1 Secret Committee *op cit*

2 Metcalfe to Edmonstone (No 23 and 26)—BSPC(I) 24 October and 31 October, 1808 C69 and C2

3 *Ibid* 20 June 1808, *op cit* same date, C3 paras 40 41

4 *Ibid* paras 43 44

5 Governor General's *Minute* 17 July, 1808—BSPC(I) 20 June, 1808, C2, para 17

On 28 July, 1808 Metcalfe left Delhi accompanied by a small Muhammadan escort and practically without attachés and secretaries Meanwhile, Ranjit Singh had written to Lord Minto in reply to his communication of 17 July, welcoming the appointment of Mr. Metcalfe and expressing the hope that his visit would strengthen the foundations of Anglo-Sikh friendship[1] Metcalfe proceeded to Patiala where its ruler Sahib Singh greeted the envoy "with profuse demonstrations of joy," surrendering the keys of the town for restoration to him as a gift from the British Government.[2] A Lahore minister with a letter from the Maharaja had also arrived there to welcome the mission and request the envoy to join the Maharaja at Kasur, where he was encamped The mission proceeded slowly because of the flooded state of the country and the intrigues of Kaithal and Jind sardars who tried to hamper its progress Metcalfe reported that their designs aimed at prejudicing the Maharaja against the British Government. He crossed the Sutlej on 2 September and after crossing the Beas on the 5th, reached Bhyrowal the same day

Empowered to negotiate with the Maharaja and self-conscious of his position as an accredited agent of the British Government, the young British envoy had left Delhi with full information about the so-called French intrigues in Persia His personal Memoranda reveals the enormous political power, which he presumed, could be wielded from a Lahore Residency. He hoped to superintend Central Asian politics, check the French threat, study the character of Ranjit Singh and collect all political information about the Sikh Court at Lahore.[3] It was also his intention to establish a preliminary intercourse with the Amir of Kabul, to appoint secret news-writers at Lahore, Kabul, Peshawar, Kandahar, Multan, Herat and as far as possible in the interior of Persia The Maharaja could, in the meantime, be left to guess the real objects of the mission, which Metcalfe intended to disclose only if a French agent arrived at Lahore or he received intelligence of the actual advance of a French army towards Persia.[4] But all these grandiose schemes and visionary ideas received a rude shock as soon as he arrived at Kasur with his meagre escort and inferior equipment.

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1 Ranjit Singh to Lord Minto, 6 July, 1808—HMS (I)

2 Metcalfe to Edmonstone, No 8—BSPC (I) 19 September, 1808, C41

3 *Metcalfe's Personal Memoranda*, Kaye, 1, 249 *ff*.

4 Ibid

7 A Free lance's visit

It is possible to reconstruct how the Maharaja viewed the arrival of the British mission A few months earlier, he had witnessed at his Court, the abuse of his hospitality by another Englishman, one Captain Mathews—"an expansive free lance on half pay and travelling for amusement" Mathews, a Deputy Commissary of Ordnance at Fatehgarh, who had been allowed to proceed to Hardwar, the Punjab and Kashmir in a private capacity, had been treated with great attention by the inhabitants of Lahore and with unbounded hospitality by its ruler [1] While a guest of the Darbar, he had allowed himself to get involved in local intrigues, particularly with the Maharaja's wife Mehtab Kaur, who had made him distinct propositions for British aid in subverting Ranjit Singh's power [2] Mathews' reprehensible conduct had met the disapprobation of the Government and he had been recalled, but the harm had already been done and his proceedings had given an impression to the Maharaja that he had been an accredited British agent It is, therefore, evident that Mathews' vicious transactions at Lahore had created a settled prejudice in the mind of the Maharaja against the British Government. Consequently, Metcalfe soon discovered that Ranjit Singh considered him another spy of the British, and that this impression had to be removed before he could gain his confidence [3]

8 Metcalfe's Reception

While Mathews' visit to Lahore had created suspicion in Ranjit Singh's mind, Metcalfe felt sore at his reception at Kasur On the day of his arrival, the high dignitaries of the Darbar had arranged a magnificient reception for him A contigent of 10,000 Lahore troops in full battle-dress welcomed him on his arrival Metcalfe, who had misgivings regarding the external appearance of his small escort, "whose clothing was in a most discreditable condition," sharply

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee, 13 September, 1808—BISL (I), Vol 11

2 Interesting details of Capt Mathews' transactions at Lahore are to be found in his private correspondence with the Acting Adjutant General C F. Falgan *vide* Bengal Secret Enclosures 15 September, 1808-HMS (I), Vol 202, No 21, *fol* 97-126 Metcalfe seems to have been supplied with copies of this correspondence and directed to do away with the evil effects of Mathews visit *Vide* Edmonstone to Metcalfe 20 June, 1808 BSCP (I) same date C3, paras 61-62

3 Metcalfe to Edmonstone No 16 BSPC (I) 17 October, 1808, C12

reacted to the display of Lahore battalions "Ranjit Singh's army is assembling from all quarters," he reported, "notwithstanding the reports that are in circulation respecting his intention, I am inclined to suppose that his principal motive in collecting his forces at this period is a desire to make a good display of his military power before the British Empire." [1]

On 12 September, the envoy paid his first visit to the Maharaja The official Lahore Diarist merely observes "the said *firangee*, accompanied by a few white soldiers, was granted audience by His highness" [2] Metcalfe again felt sore at his reception for the Maharaja had not come out of his Camp to greet him "It appears to me," he angrily informed the Government, "that the rank and dignity of the Government which I have the honour to represent, required that the Rajah should come out of his camp to meet the mission" As a matter of fact, he had earlier signified to the Maharaja that such were his expectations, but the Lahore Government had not agreed to it The acts of the Maharaja were, therefore, considered "as offensive and disrespectful" Since the envoy was determined to conceal the object of his visit, nothing of any significance transpired at this meeting When the mutual presents had been exchanged, the Maharaja quietly asked Metcalfe as to why he had taken the trouble of coming to his Court in such haste despite the hot, sultry rainy season and the flooded state of the country The envoy replied that he had come to improve the existing amicable relations between the two states To this the Maharaja replied that he was quite welcome to do so [3] The dubious tone of the Maharaja, however, upset Metcalfe, who discerned clearly that Ranjit Singh had a will of his own , that he was too powerful a chief to exhibit the servility displayed by Sahib Singh of Patiala

While the envoy's studied reticence aroused the suspicions of the Maharaja, the latter's aloofness settled a prejudice in the mind of the British emissary Incidents, some real and some imaginary, strengthened Metcalfe's conviction that the Maharaja's reception was designed to make it appear that the British envoy had waited upon

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1 *Ibid* No 13 *op cit* 3 October 1808, C 20
2 *UT* II, 73
3 Metcalfe to Edmonstone No 16-BSPC(I) 17 October 1808 C12

him He, therefore, demanded that the Maharaja shnuld pay him a returo visit [1]

9 Ranjit Singh s distrust

On 16 September, the Maharaja returoed the visit Accompanied by numerous Sikh sardars aod the Lahore battalions arrayed all along the route, he entered the British camp with great pomp and show Metcalfe had arraoged the reception in a special hnt decorated in oriental style with a huge masoad Two elephaots, numerous horses and other gifts were to be preseoted tn bim Ranjit Singh, however, ignored the masnad and occnpied a chair aod entered into desultory conversation on military matters Ooce more he tried in vain to ascertain the real object of the missinn The envny's studied reserve, therefore, began to arouse Ranjit Siogh's suspicinns

Rumours were already afloat cnncerning the sinister designs of the *firangee* mission whnse objects Metcalfe had not disclosed The atmosphere around the British camp began to grnw tense, and the local sardars indulged in a whispering campaign Patiala had already forsaken the Khalsaji Jind Nabha and Kaithal were sitting on the fence and there was unrest in the Sikh country Metcalfe reported on 18 September that the Maharaja viewed the mission with acute suspicioa that his reception lacked cnrdiality, and that the cnllectinn nf armies at Kasur was for some sinister purpnse, or at least, to enhance his own importance in the eyes nf the assembled chiefs by appearing tn hold the British mission of little accnunt [2] "In brief," Metcalfe cnncluded, "it would appear that I am regarded as a dangerous enemy to be guarded against, rather than the Envoy of a friendly State charged with most amicable duties"

What the envoy failed to realise was tbat Ranjit Singh was preparing to march across the Sntlej on his third Malwa expedition and that he was in no mood to waste his time on endless courtesy calls

10 Metcalfe s grumblings

Matters were worsened by Metcalfe's attempts to enter into secret intercourse with several Sikh chiefs,[3] his acceptance of communications from the Maharaja's mother-in law, rani Sada Kaur,[4] and attempts

1 *Ibid*
2 *Ibid* No 16 *op cit*
3 *Ibid*
4 *Ibid* No 23 BSPC(I) 24 October, 1808, C68

to dispatch spies to Kahul without the cognizance of the Lahore authorities[1] All this was hound to present bis visit to Ranjit Singh in a light not very dissimilar to tbat of Captain Maihews'. Steps were, therefore taken to prevent his clandestine intrigues Spies and guards watched the Camp and the banks of the river.[2] The envoy's letters were opened[3] Eavesdroppers swarmed the *British* Camp when some of the Cis-Sutlej cbiefs visited Metcalfe[4] Finally, the mission found itself on the point of being exposed to disgrace for lack of funds, for, the hankers had refused to honour the envoy's drafts[5]

Metcalfe's despatches to Bengal, so full of grumblings and resentment, sruprised Lord Minto, who reported to the Secret Committee that the Maharaja's distrust was the result of a fear that the British had designs on his independence—a belief fomented hy interested persons and the past hehaviour of Captain Mathews He also apprehended that the British would oppose the consolidation of his power in the Punjah Furthermore, he was opposed to any mission which aimed at fostering friendly relations with the Amir of Kahul.[6]

On the morning of 17 Septemher, the Maharaja informed Metcalfe that his sojourn at Kasur would end in a few days as his presence was urgently required for the settlement of certain districts. He politely demanded that the friendly communication of the Governor-General with which he was charged be made over to bim[7] This clever move was considered by the envoy a plain notice of his dismissal The ahruptness of the demand enraged him, hut he agreed to deliver the Governor-General's letter on the 19th, at a meeting to which Ranjit Singh had invited him[8]

Thus, after two weeks' delay, Metcalfe delivered the Governor-General's letter to the Maharaja on 19 Septemher, and though pressed to do so, he did not think that the time had arrived to disclose the

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1 *Ibid*
2 *Ibid* No 16, *ut supra*
3 *Ibid*
4 *Ibid* No 23, *ut supra*
5 *Ibid* No 16 *ut supra*
6 Governor-General to Secret Committee 15 December, 1808 BISL(I), para 44
7. Ranjit Singh to Metcalfe (Enclosure)-Metcalfe, No 17 BSPC(I) 17 Octo ber, 1808 C13
8 Metcalfe to Ranjit Singh, 17 September, *ibid*

object of his mission[1] The conversation was carried on with the utmost good humour, except that the envoy complained to the Maharaja of "encouraging unjust and unworthy suspicions" A Council of State was convened to hold deliberations and Metcalfe was informed that they were unable to determine any course of action without being informed of the British propositions in detail The odroitness of the Maharaja now left the envoy no other course but to comply with his wishes, which he did on the 22nd September

11 Diplomacy of evasion

The minutes of this meeting form an interesting study in the art of evasive diplomacy on either side After the exchange of usual compliments, Metcalfe in an over elaborate speech dwelt upon the French intrigues in Persia They had he observed, designs both on Kabul and the Punjab The British Government s first concern was to warn the Maharaja of the danger The mission had been sent by the Governor-General to negotiate an ogreement for the extirpation of the common enemy A similar envoy, he added, was being dispatched to Kabul The Maharaja and his Council failed to grasp the import of the communication, but they felt overjoyed at the information communicated to them and hastily expressed concurrence in his Lordship's plans[2]

But it was obvious that the Maharaja was not sotisfied and he began to interrogate the envoy closely He asked when the French invasion was expected, ond whether the British troops were ready to advance If so, how far would they odvance ond what force would be sent against them Metcalfe could hardly think of adequate replies He said that the time when the enemy would knock at the gates of the Punjab could not at that moment be ascertained, that it was the practice of the British to seek their enemy; that the British Government would no doubt send a force to Kabul, and that the amount of force would depend upon the circumstance There was, he assured the Maharaja, no doubt of the designs of the French It behoved wise governments to be prepared and that the British troops were always ready to advance

The Maharaja and his Council appeared to be satisfied, but asked what would happen if the Kabul ruler threw himself into the

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1 Metcalfe to Edmonstone No 19 BSPC(I) 17 October 1808 C18
2 *Ibid* No 20 BSPC(I)17 October 1808 C19

arms of the French Metcalfe scoffed at the idea and remarked that he did not think that the King of Kabul would be so blind to his own interests But if he did join the French barbarians, then they must attack the King of Kabul as well as the French "In the course of this conversation," admits Metcalfe, "I endeavoured, in conformity to the instructions of the Supreme Government, to alarm the Rajah for the safety of his territories, and at the same time, to give him confidence in our protection"[1]

But the approach of a European army and the danger to which his dominions would be exposed made no impression on Ranjit Singh's mind[2] The Council kept up the farce of serious deliberations on the issue for two more days On 25 September Metcalfe was informed that the Maharaja concurred in everything and was desirous of having the closest connections with the British Government but as the matter was of great importance, it needed further deliberation. The result would, therefore, be communicated to the envoy the next morning[3]

12 Third Malwa campaign

But the next morning, perhaps, brought to Metcalfe the greatest surprise ever witnessed by a British envoy in the country of the Sikhs. Suddenly, as the day dawned, Metcalfe found to his chagrin that the Maharaja was moving off with his armies towards the Beas, directing the Mission to follow. The French threat and a treaty to counteract it, could wait till he had re-established his authority over the wavering Cis Sutlej princelings On 1 October he captured Faridkot, a Patiala tributary and halted at Khai, wither the envoy, in direct contravention of his instructions, followed him.[4] Metcalfe saw that no Cis-Sutlej chief had either the will or the means to resist his arms[5] On 4 October he followed Ranjit Singh to Faridkot, and observed the anarchical conditions prevailing in the country After levying exactions at Faridkot, the Maharaja left for Fatehgarh and marched to Malerkotla, arriving there on 22 October.[6] The Pathan chief paid a levy of 100,000

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1 *Ibid*

2 Governor General to Secret Committee 15 December, 1808 BSPC(I), Vol 10 *fol* 377, para 22

3 Metcalfe to Edmonstone No 20 BSPC(I) 17 October, 1808 C19

4 Edmonstone to Metcalfe, 1 August, 1808 HMS(I), Vol 592 No 38 paras 2-3

5 Metcalfe to Edmonstone No 23 BSPC(I) 24 October, 1808 C69

6 *Ibid* No 30 BSPC(I) 14 November, 1808 C14

rupees and his appeals to Metcalfe obtained him no redress [1] On 26 October the envoy refused to follow Ranjit Singh any further, and demanded that he should fix some place where the Mission could wait until his return The Maharaja felt surprised and naively complained that he had made repeated halts for the envoy's benefit, but he ultimately assigned Gongrana as a place to which the Mission could retire [2]

13 Report from Gongrana

Leaving Metcalfe behind to compose his report and to review in anger the result of his negotiations, Raojit Singh captured Shahabad and Ambala [3] The Cis-Sutlej Sikh chiefs, who had so far kept aloof, now hovered round him for the distribution of the spoils Bhag Singh of Jind, Lal Singh of Kaithal and Jaswant Singh of Nabha obtained their shares and Sahib Singh of Patiala reluctantly come to Laknor and entered into a bond of fraternal unity by an exchange of turbans with Ranjit Singh [4] While the British Mission awaited at Gongrana, the Maharaja completed his third Malwa expedition and set out for Lahore and Amritsar To Amritsar, therefore, Metcalfe repaired on 10 December, to resume negotiations

Metcalfe's reports about Ranjit Singh's third incursion across the Sutlej had created a sharp reaction at Calcutta It was obvious that he had no intention of treating the British Mission seriously The envoy felt angry and crest-fallen, for, the Maharaja's elusive tactics had narrowed down his schemes of superintending Central Asian politics to an occasional flippant reference to the Napoleonic menace, and to matters like protests over the desertion of the mission sepoys,[5] court intrigues,[6] theft of a few camels[7] and other petty details He realised that the British refusal of protection to the Cis Sutlej states had encouraged Ranjit Singh to dominate the region As a result the chiefs were then in compulsory attendance on him and the local sardars bent upon mischief [8] The Maharaja regarded the French menace as illusory, and was anxious to prevent Elphinstone's passage

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1 For Metcalfe s correspondence with the chief of Malerkotla *vide* his dispat h No 41 BSPC(1) 7 December 1808

2 Metcalfe to Edmonstone No 33 BSPC(I) 1 November 1808 C1

3 *Ibid* No 37 BSPC(I) 12 December 1808 C7

4 Seton to Edmonstone 7 December, 1808 (P) 3 1

5 Metcalfe to Edmonstone No 28 29 BSPC(I) 7 November 1808, C1 2

6 *Ibid* No 23 BSPC(I) 24 October, 1808 C 69

7 *Ibid* No 23 *ut supra*

8 *Ibid* No 16 BSPC(I) 17 October 1808 C12

through his territories to Afghanistan[1] The Maharaja, Metcalfe reported, was a person justly notorious for lack of good faith[2] "No part of his persooal character," he wrote angrily, "presents any satisfactory assuraoce of cordiality, good faith, coosistency or hearty co operation For want of consistency and good faith, he is justly notorious, my despatches will have described repeated instances of deceit aod evasion; he has no regard for truth, aod can descend even to the violation of solemn promises, and the whole tenor of his behaviour impresses me most stroogly with the conviction of his total want of priociple"[3]

14 Sikh Demands

But the envoy's reseotmeot against Ranjit Singh should not prevent us from realising what the Maharaja wanted In the first palce, he desired an offensive and defensive alliance with the British As Metcalfe possessed no authority to enter into an alliance of this nature, he shrewdly estimated that a general defensive alliance with Ranjit Singh would hind the British Government to protect Lahore territories An offensive alliance was also out of the question, for, Ranjit Singh's insistence on such a treaty appeared to be the outcome of his desire to secure British concurrence in persuing unhampered his ambitious schemes of conquest[4] Secondly, the Maharaja claimed that the British should acknowledge his sovereignty over the whole Sikh country, or at least, engage itself in not opposing his views with regard to the Cis-Sutlej chiefs[5] Curiously, Metcalfe recommended to the Government of Iodia the acceptance of this demand A refusal to accept it, without a determination to oppose him would perpetuate his distrust of the British Government In aoy case, he argued, the actual state of the couotry at the time would not make much difference if the declaration was made Ranjit Siogh had virtually made himself overlord of the regioo hetween the Sutlej and the Jumna aod his successive cooquests tended towards a complete subjugation of the area[6]

It is, however, obvious that Metcalfe's williogness to concede this demand of the Maharaja seems to be an attempt at securing his

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1 *Ibid* No 23 *ut supra*
2 *Ibid* No 35-BSPC(I) 28 November 1808 C4
3 *Ibid*.
4 *Ibid* also Governor General to Secret Committee 15 December 1908 BISL(I) Vol 10 *fol* 377 *sq* para 2
5 *Ibid*
6. *Ibid*

co-operation by conciliation Obsessed still by the Francophobia, and with a desire to obtain Ranjit Singh's aid in securing a direct intercourse with Kabul made him realise that without this concession, it would be impossible to fulfil the original objects of his mission The absurd part of his suggestion, however, was that the declaration acknowledging Ranjit Singh's paramountcy over the Sikhs be made revocable if in the furture it was to the British advantage to do so[1]

Thirdly Ranjit Singh wanted a positive assurance that the British Government would not interfere in favour of Afghanistan in his quarrel with the Amir Further, he demanded that the time and route of the march of the British armies passing through his territories should be settled with his concurrence, and on the termination of hostilities with the French, the British armies should evacuate his territories Metcalfe considered these propositions quite reasonable[2] To the Maharaja's stipulation that the British Government should not retain any Sikh in its service an equivalent British demand that the Lahore ruler would not take Europeans into his service made the former withdraw it hastily[3]

15 Fort William's reaction

Metcalfe's report reached Calcutta towards the beginning of October 1808 In the meantime, the Franco Persian menace had receded and the Government of India had cautioned him not to accede to any general terms of amity As the fog of diplomacy cleared up and the objects of the mission became obsolete, a claim to British paramountcy over the Cis Sutlej region began to be examined by the Governor-General-in Council The Lahore ruler and the Amir of Afghanistan would have been useful allies in the event of a French invasion from the north But in the absence of that eventuality there was hardly any need to enter into any agreement with Ranjit Singh Metcalfe's earlier reports had clearly shown Ranjit Singh as an ambitious "military despot," and though his military power was deemed quite formidable, yet it was realised that he could hardly afford a rupture with the British Government A policy of active intervention in the affairs of Cis Sutlej states was, therefore, resolved upon "With reference to the character and disposition of that Chief," Lord Minto wrote to the Secret Committee on 15 December, "we could not resist the conviction that the interests and security of the British Government

1 *Ibid*, para 2
2 *Ibid*, paras 6 7
3 *Ibid*

would be best promoted by the reduction, if not the entire subersion of his power."[1]

While this momentous decision had been taken at Calcutta, both the envoy and the Maharaja were relaxing: the former awaiting the reactions of the Government of India to his formidable report; and the latter in the arms of his favourite concubine Mowran, whom he had not seen for the last three months.[2]

1 Governor-General to Secret Committee, 15 December, 1808-BISL(I), Vol 10, para 58

2. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, 19 December, 1808 No 38 39, BSPC(I), C2 and 3.

two years previously with respect to the limitation of the Company's frontiers, had now become outmoded and inexpedient

Measures to prevent Ranjit Singh from extending his dominions were, therefore, set into motion It was resolved to extend British protection to the chiefs south of the Sutlej and demand from the Maharaja, the immediate withdrawal of the Lahore armies to the other side of the river. Ranjit Singh was to be required to relinquish all pretensions of sovereignty over the Cis Sutlej states and to surrender all conquests made subsequent to the arrival of the British Mission [1] Metcalfe was censured for having consented to follow the Maharaja on his military expedition, for, such a conduct had afforded the countenance of British Government to his encroachments [2] "We agree with you," Lord Minto was informed by the Secret Committee, "in deeming it an object of general importance to prevent the subju gation by the Rajah of these petty states and chieftains in the immediate neighbourhood of our frontier and do not disapprove of the course, which you have resolved upon to pursue for the purpose "[3]

2 Advance to the Sutlej

To give effect to this decision, it was considered necessary that a small British detachment should immediately advance and occupy a fort on the river Sutlej Lieut Col Ochterlony, the Garrison Commander at Allahabad, who had already worked as Resident at Delhi and possessed an intimate knowledge of the politics and interests of the Cis-Sutlej states, was selected to command the British force. As no essential advantage could be derived from the further stay of Metcalfe at Ranjit Singh's Court, it was decided to withdraw him as soon as the intended military post was established near the Sutlej [4] In a restricted manner, Ochterlony was empowered to perform all political duties with the State of Lahore and the Cis Sutlej states without, however, incurring any embarrassing obligations on behalf of the British Government He was further directed to collect accurate information regarding the disposition, character and military resources of the various Cis-Sutlej chiefs and also suggest the best mode of combining their power advantageously against the ruler of Lahore [5] However, the diplomatic

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1 Edmonstone to Metcalfe, 31 October 1808 Metcalfe to Ranjit Singh 12 December 1808-BSPC(I) 2 January 1809 C93

2 Secret Committee *ut supra*, para 14

3 *Ibid* para 17

4 Edmonstone to Ochterlony, 29 December, 1808 BSPC(I) 2 January, 1809, C96.

5 *Ibid* 14 November, 1808 (P) 6 1.

CHAPTER VI

BRITISH ADVANCE TO THE SUTLEJ

1 A momentous decision

And yet, the change in British policy towards Lahore and the Cis-Sutlej region, although a departure from the principles laid down in the Home Government's orders of 19 October, 1805 and 27 February, 1806,[1] was not abrupt Lord Minto's despatches on the Lahore Mission and the Cis Sutlej affairs,[2] had convinced the Home Government that Metcalfe's Mission had failed to accomplish its object[3] With the recession of the French menace, it had also outlived its utility. The Supreme Government had given its decided opinion that even without reference to the apprehended French invasion, the approximation of Ranjit Singh's 'military dominion' and the introduction of Sikh power into the region between the Sutlej and the Jumna, would disturb the security of British possessions[4] The Maharaja's outrageous demands, even if acceded to, would afford no surety of his co-operation against an invading army, but would, probably tend to animate and extend the objects of his ambition An Anglo-Sikh connection on the basis of these demands would not only benefit him but also implant an ambitious military power upon the British frontier[5] The reduction or subversion of his power was manifestly conducive to British interests It was, therefore, necessary to confine Ranjit Singh's dominion within certain limits[6]

For these obvious reasons, the Home Government considered it necessary to re examine the basic principles of the Indian Government's policy previously followed by Cornwallis and Barlow. Recent events in the north-west and the war with Amir Khan also made it clear, that the policy so far practiced, could not be adhered to in the future.[7] The political system which guided British statesmen in India

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1 Secret Comm ttee, Vol III, *fol* 99 *sq* and *fol* 117 *sq*.

2 Governor General to Secret Committee, 26 September and 15 December, 1808-BISL(I), Vol 10, *fol* 327 *ff*. and *fol* 377 *ff*

3 Secret Committee-*Memorandum* (80), HMS(I) Vol 511, *fol* 33 *ff*

4 Governor General to Secret Committee, 15 December, 1808 and 15 April, 1809 BISL(I) Vols 10 and 11

5 *Ibid* 15 December, 1808

6 *Ibid* 15 April, 1809, para 3

7, Secret Committee (Memorandum No 80) *op cit*

two years previously with respect to the limitation of the Company's frontiers, had now become outmoded and inexpedient

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1 Edmonstone to Metcalfe 31 October 1808 Metcalfe to Ranjit Singh 12 December 1808-BSPC(I) 2 January 1809 C93

2 Secret Committee *ut supra* para 14

3 *Ibid* para 17

4 Edmonstone to Ochterlony 29 December 1808 BSPC(I) 2 January 1809 C96

5 *Ibid* 14 November 1808-(P) 61.

authority vested in Ochterlony, so far as the Lahore Government was concerned, was extremely limited His function was merely to receive and address formal communications to the ruler of Lahore, and he was positively forbidden to incur any engagements or make declarations which might impose obligations on the British Government

On 14 November, the Governor General in Council issued more precise instructions to the Commander in Chief to confine the Lahore dominions to the south of the Sutlej[1] Besides Ochterlony's detachment of two battalions (2986 men),[2] a third with a squadron of cavalry and a detachment of Pioneers, was placed in the direct line of communication between his corps and Karnal, which could advance to support him[3] To strengthen the frontier, additional forces were moved to Saharanpur, Karnal, Meerut, Delhi and Rewari A total force of 8726 men were ordered to occupy the frontier stations, within nine marches of Karnal, to support the detachment on the Sutlej under Ochterlony[4]

Since it had been determined that the British detachment should reach its destination under all circumstances, the need to win over the Cis-Sutlej chiefs had become obvious A directive had already been issued to Archibald Seton the Resident at Delhi[5] It was to be assumed that Patiala and other Sikh chiefs had been forced to acknowledge Ranjit Singh's sovereignty Now that the British Government had resolved upon to limit Ranjit Singh's dominion to the south of the Sutlej, an offer of British protection be made to them It was considered desirable to adopt towards them a determined attitude "tempered with conciliation and persuation" They were to be told that only the British were in a position to undertake the defence of their territories by actually advancing troops to the Sutlej The wavering Sikh chiefs should be made to realise that any resistance on their part or professions of allegiance to Ranjit Singh, would be considered a hostile act In short, the British detachment was to advance without reference to the declared sentiments of the chiefs through whose territories it had occasion to pass[6]

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee 15 April 1809 BISL(I) Vol 11 para 14

2 Assistt Adjutant General to Ochterlony 12 January 1809 BSPC(I) 23 January 1809

3 C-in C to Governor General 17 December 1808 *op cit* C55, para 5

4 *Ibid* Distribution Return of Corps BSPC(I) *op cit* C56

5 Edmonstone to Seton 26 December 1808 BSPC(I) *op cit*, C21,

6 *Ibid* para 2.

It is obvious that the directive issued by the Government of India lacked any moral justification Based on a vague estimation that the Sikh chiefs who were unable to secure British protection in March 1808 at Delhi, and had since then aligned themselves with the Lahore Government would be willing to change sides by diplomatic pressure or force of arms Rudimentary conditions of British protection which had, in the meantime, been worked out, were similarly based on the wrong presumption that the preservation of the rights of the Cis Sutlej chiefs and their virtual existence depended upon it No sacrifice on the part of the Sikh chiefs was demanded, though it was considered that the protection of one state by another, in a military sense, could never be gratuitous Although no specific remuneration was stipulated, the protected states were bound to render active military co operation in the defence of their country [1]

3 Ochterlony s Instructions

When these instructions reached the Delhi Residency Archibald Seton acted with undue promptness A crisis was declared to be at hand it should be prevented in a manner which should 'evince the decided superiority of the British arms'" Any delay, would allow time to the Sikh chiefs now in forced subordination to Ranjit Singh, to make further arrangements with him This would be harmful to British interests It was, therefore essential to wean the Sikh chiefs away from Lahore Accordingly, Ochterlony was directed to report any signs of disaffection or even of revolt against the Maharaja [3] He was to convince them of the groundless nature of their apprehensions at the introduction of British troops within their territories and make them appreciate the benefits of British protection It was realised that the system if enforced judiciously, would bring benefits to the British Government It would secure to them the facilities and resources of the Sikh country in the event of any military operations To the Sikh chiefs, a close connection with an independent military power would give confidence and security [4]

To ensure the immediate enforcement of the new policy, therefore, Ochterlony was ordered to advance to the vicinity of Patiala and to expel by force, if necessary, the Lahore force then in occupation of

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1 Edmonstone to O hterlony 29 December 1808 BSPC(I) 30 January 1809 C96 paras 7 10

2 Seton to Edmonstone 11 January 1809 BSPC(I) 30 January 1809 para 3

3 Edmonstone to Ochterlony 29 December, 1808 *op cit* para 7

4 *Ibid* paras 7 9.

Ambala Col. Marshall, commanding at Chilkanah, had orders to support him in any emergency But in no case was Ochterlony to cross the Sutlej without further orders from the Commander-in Chief[1] The Resident at Delhi had, in the meantime, directed the *vakils* of the Cis-Sutlej chiefs to proceed to Karnal and join the British camp Bhag Singh of Jind who had been summoned to Delhi was on his way to Karnal A communication was addressed to Sahib Singh of Patiala asking him to prove his attachment to the British Government by co operation with Lieut Col Ochterlony[2]

On 16 January, the detachment crossed the Jumna at a fine ford, about 5 miles above Buriya and encamped on the western bank of that river The petty sardars, actuated by sheer opportunism, watched its arrival both with consternation and relief They seemed ready to join the British, but would not declare themselves openly for fear of the Lahore Government The Buriya chief had sent a message that he was compelled "to seek a temporising policy" in joining Ranjit Singh, who was mustering forces at Phillour to check the British advance He expressed satisfaction that the British Government had assumed protection over the country, and that he would desert Ranjit Singh and join the British as soon as possible[3] The Kalsia chief, who had been long in the service of Ranjit Singh also sent an assurance that in the event of hostilities with Lahore, he would forsake his master and join the British army Gurdit Singh of Ladwa had openly joined Ranjit Singh Bhanga Singh of Thanisar and the Patiala *diwan* had left Patiala The wily chief of Kaithal, Bhai Lal Singh was with Ranjit Singh wooing his favours, but it was certain, that on the first favourable opportunity, he would quit him and join the British[4]

4 Counter measures

Intelligence had been received from the news-writer at Amritsar that Ranjit Singh had arrived there on 10 January and was taking counter-measures to stop Ochterlony's advance Considerable Lahore forces had reached Phillour to reinforce the Amhala garrison The Jind and Nabha chiefs were being frantically summoned to Amritsar[5] On 12

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1 Assistt Adjutant General to Ochterlony 12 January, 1809 (P) 2 104 5, paras 3 4

2 Seton to Bhag Singh and Sahib Singh BSPC(I) 6 February, 1809 C42

3 Ochterlony to Edmonstone 16 January 1809 BSPC(I) *op cit* C50, para 2

4 *Ibid* 18 January, 1809, *op cit* C51

5 Seton to Edmonstone 18 January, 1809 BSPC(I) 6 February, 1809, C48, paras 2-3

January, Metcalfe reported that the Maharaja's military preparations were in full swing. troops were being assembled from all quarters, ammunition and military stores were being collected and guns were being hastily mounted on the new fort of Amritsar.[1] Ranjit Singh, he observed on 18 January, was making every preparation for war; that he would cross the Sutlej with his army to oppose Ochterlony and in that event, his action would be regarded as a declaration of war on the British On 26 January, the envoy further confirmed his views that the Maharaja had collected an army sufficient to oppose the British and had nominally taken the field And on 22 January he suggested to the Commander-in Chief an invasion of the Punjab [2]

5 Bhag Singh s arrival

Meanwhile, on 18 January the Maharaja's uncle raja Bhag Singh of Jind arrived at Dadupur. A shrewd opportunist and a confirmed meddler in all Cis-Sutlej affairs, he was regarded by all an elder statesman The Maharaja considered him his well-wisher and the sardars on both sides of the Sutlej paid deference to his advice, age and farsightedness Bhag Singh assumed the role of a mediator and tried to effect a rapprochement between Ranjit Singh and the British He told Ochterlony that the Maharaja was very anxious to avoid war, though his suspicious nature and bad counsellers were not unlikely to involve him in one [3] On 20 January, Ochterlony informed the raja that as the British Government intended to require from the Maharaja, the restitution of all territories seized during his late expedition, he himself should not expect exemption from surrendering to the rightful owners the territories received by him The raja, who was the largest beneficiary in this respect, observed that he would not lose much [4] At the same time he conveyed the impression that inspite of their anticipated loss of territories through restitution, the British Government might depend upon the co operation of every Sikh chief.

6 Metcalfe s Ultimatum

On 20 November, Metcalfe received revised instructions The

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1. Metcalfe to Edmonstone (Despatches No 50, 60 and 63) BSPC(I) 13 March 1809, C45 52 and 63

2. *Ibid* (No 93) BSPC(I) *ut supra*

3 Ochterlony to Edmonstone 20 January, 1809 BSPC(I) 13 February, 1809, C18 para 2

4 Seton to Edmonstone, 25 January, 1809 BSPC(I)11 February 1809 C6, para 2

measures now resolved upon against the Lahore Government because of the disappearance of the French menace, had changed the objects of his mission The issue had now become clear. The French aggressor and the impending invasion from the north-west and the defensive alliance to counteract it, had completely disappeared The threat had now moved from the east towards the Sutlej and the Maharaja seemed to be the aggressor It now remained for Metcalfe to confront the Maharaja with the British claim to paramountcy, the resolution to protect the chiefs in the Cis Sutlej region, and to demand the surrender of his recent conquests and the withdrawal of his troops immediately to the right bank of the Sutlej The detachment under Ochterlony and the forces under General St Leger, in the meantime, continued to advance

The envoy followed the Maharaja to Amritsar, and on 12 December delivered an ultimatum embodying the British demands He showed surprise and concern that the Maharaja aimed at the subjugation of the chiefs, who had long been considered under the protection of the power ruling in the north of India He accused him of having committed various acts of hostility, and of attempting to coerce the British Government into recognising his usurpations, while his claim of so called suzerainty over the Sikh country was a subject of reference He protested against his invasion of the country between the Sutlej and the Jumna and demanded the immediate restoration of all places seized by him The British, he was informed, would never consider his claim to paramountcy over the Sikhs as they had taken the Cis Sutlej chiefs under their protection [1]

The Maharaja took the British demands calmly. He immediately left Amritsar, as the town was in a state of uproar for the reason that his Muslim concubine Mowran had converted a Hindu to her faith Metcalfe visited the Golden Temple with an offering of 2,605 rupees to propitiate the Sikh priests and "the whole tribe of the Sikhs" The tension continued till 21 December, when the envoy resumed negotiations at Lahore with the Maharaja and his ministers [2]

7 Battle of Wits

Then the battle of wits began On behalf of the Maharaja, the

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1 Envoy to Rajah of Lahore 12 December 1808 Enclosure in Metcalfe to Edmonstone No 43-BSPC(I) 2 January 1809 C93

2 Metcalfe No 44 BSPC(I) 30 January, 1809 C100 No 46 *op cit* 6 February, 1809, C92

British claim to paramountcy over the Cis Sutlej Sikh states was vehemently challenged It was pointed out that the British Government had never on any occasion exercised authority in Cis Sutlej affairs The mere fact that Ranjit Singh had been allowed with his former incursions to the south of the Sutlej, manifested that it had no intention of exercising any supremacy over the Sikh chiefs The introduction of British power in the north of India gave them no inherent right of interference beyond the Jumna Had it been so, it would have been used to settle the Cis-Sutlej affairs When the Sikh chiefs had gone to Delhi in March 1808 to complain against Ranjit Singh, no attention had been paid to them On the other hand, they had since acknowledged Lahore supremacy and no British protest had so far been made against it The British right of paramountcy, if any, had never been exercised before In fact, it was an obsolete right, and having once been relinquished, it could not be revived at pleasure [1]

To these arguments, Metcalfe who had not yet informed the Maharaja of the advance of the British troops to the Sutlej replied with equal vehemence He said that it was unnecessary to prove the original right of the British Government as to when it had succeeded to the power exercised by the Marathas in the region British supremacy over the country between the Sutlej and the Jumna had been fully admitted beyond any doubt, that the policy observed by his government had always been consistent Though it had allowed the Cis Sutlej chiefs to conduct their concerns without control, it had never renounced its right over them British non interference proceeded from a wish to avoid unnecessary control The Maharaja's first two incursions could not be termed as invasions for, he had gone at the invitation of the Sikh chiefs without any designs of a settled conquest Hence, it was thought unnecessary to take notice of them British protection had never been refused to the Sikh chiefs, when they had visited Delhi, but it was believed that their alarms were unfounded At any rate, the right of making a declaration to that effect had been reserved

Adverting to the claim that the Cis Sutlej Sikh chiefs had

1 The substance of these arguments advanced by the Maharaja's ministers and the envoy's reply is based on Metcalfe's Despatches to the Government of India of 18 20 and 22 December 1808 (Nos 48 49 and 50) BSPC (I) 30 January 1809 C103 C105 Governor General to Secret Committee 15 April 1809 BISL(I) *fol* 137 *ff* paras 13 15 20

acknowledged Lahore suzerainty, Metcalfe replied that the British Government had not heard of it, and that if it had, it could not have agreed to it He concluded that during the recent invasion, the Maharaja had tried to impose his authority over the country As such, the British Government now found itself called upon to interfere and declare to him that it could not acquiesce in his designs

Meanwhile, to give practical support to the envoy's arguments, both Ochterlony and St Leger's armies were approaching the Sutlej When informed about it, the Mabaraja was incredulous, but Metcalfe assured him that this was part of the British defensive system, and the Maharaja observed, that it was an extraordinary kind of friendship that the envoy had come to establish He, however, offered no objection to the establishment of a British military post on the Sutlej [1]

8 Ochterlony s Negotiations

Ochterlony's detachment arrived in the vicinity of Patiala on 4 February He had already received revised orders regarding the location of the military post on the Punjab frontier His force was to be employed for the peaceful purpose" of ordering the withdrawal of Lahore troops from the territories south of the Sutlej and the fixation of Lahore Government's boundaries to the other side of that river [2]

Consequently, from Dadupur he had demanded an immediate evacuation of Ambala by Lahore troops The requisition was complied with by the Lahore garrison commandant, who moved back his troops to the banks of the Sutlej [3] Shortly afterwards, rani Dia Kaur of Ambala visited him to express her gratitude for the restoration of her possessions The Jind and Kaithal sardars had acquiesced cheerfully in withdrawing their police posts from Ambala territories At Patiala, its ruler Sahib Singh showed a "childish delight" at the arrival of the detachment and made excuses for his recent engagement with Ranjit Singh Ochterlony was unmoved by his unusual flattery and observed that the character of the chief was too well known to render it necessary for him to make any comments

A general meeting of the Cis-Sutlej chiefs was held at Patiala,

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1 Secret Committee *Memorandum* No 83 HMS(I) Vol 511 paras 30 31

2 Edmonstone to Ochterlony 30 January 1809 (P) 67 paras 1-4

3 UT ti 78 Ochterlony to Edmonstone 4 February, 1809 BSPC(I) 27 February, 1809 C 9 paras 3-4

but no minute of this conference seems to be available However, it appears that the British commander was sceptical of the profusion of good-will shown by the Malwa sardars From Malerkotla, a few days later, he complained that several Sikh chiefs were exhibiting a negative attitude towards him and that with his early departure from Patiala, their general affability had suddenly abated Sahib Singh's finances had reached the lowest ebb, he had failed to provide the required number of troops to accompany the British detachment "The Dewan Chain Singh," he observed sarcastically, "marches with me in command of of what is called a Thousand Horse !"[1]

The same day, Bhag Singh introduced a confidential agent of Ranjit Singh, who tried to impress upon Ochterlony that his master did not want to quarrel with the British Government and that the forces which he had assembled were for his own security. Ochterlony accused the Maharaja of having usurped the territories which were under the authority of the British Government The Maharaja, he said, was being led astray by selfish persons, but for his intransigence, he would have obtained the treaty for which he was now clamouring Ochterlony declined to commit these sentiments to paper, but asked the agent to report them to his master [2]

The conversation, it seems, was inconclusive and Ochterlony probably gave an assurance to the agent that he was ready for further negotiations on the subject Ten days later, more secret negotiators arrived at Malerkotla, and Ochterlony's negotiations with them, caused a delay of 5 days in the detachment forming a junction with St Leger's army

9 Storm in a tea cup

The conduct of the British commander in entering into secret negotiations with the agents of the Lahore Government, while an accredited British envoy was at Lahore, was strongly disapproved of at Calcutta [3] It was held that Ochterlony's imprudent proceedings had led to a double negotiation, which had exposed to the risk the credit of the envoy and the dignity of the British Government [4] Ochterlony's

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1 Ochterlony to Edmonstone 9 February, 1809 (P) 106(5)

2 *Notes of Conversation* (Enclosure in Ochterlony to Edmonstone) BSPC(I) 27 February, 1809, para 1

3 Edmonstone to Ochterlony 13 March, 1809-HMS(I) Vol 594, *fol* 525 *ff*

4 *Ibid* para 11

conduct was considered highly reprehensible and he was ordered to be relieved of his command [1]

The matter raised a minor storm, which led to Ochterlony's resignation on 7 April but he put up a forceful defence of his action The five days' halt, he represented to the Commander in Chief, was in conformity with his instructions, for it had afforded time to Metcalfe to complete his work at Lahore As there had been no immediate threat of hostilities, it had been received as a blessing The inference that his action had amounted to insubordination was also unfair The halt had not affected anything materially and actually he had made a *de tour* and the detachment had reached Ludhiana earlier than Metcalfe or the Maharaja had imagined Admitting that he had no right to negotiate with the Maharaja's agents, he claimed that the conference had actually helped to allay the suspicions of the ruler of Lahore [2]

The governmental censure, however, was well merited Curiously enough Metcalfe supported Ochterlony in his defence Writing on 14 April he observed that Ochterlony's halt had been of great advantage to him, that it had averted a clash with Lahore troops Further, that the commander's conduct had been quite dignified, for, he had b^^n influenced by Metcalfe s communications on the subject The evils of double negotiations were not attendant to it, though the Maharaja would have been happy to enter into them At any rate, the Maharaja s agents could get nothing from the British commander The Maharaja's real aim in despatching secret agents to the camp of the commander, he concluded was to show to the world that the military post on the Punjab frontier was being established with his concurrence [3]

The Government of India, however, continued to frown upon the conduct of the commander and Ochterlony was accused of encouraging the secret representatives and listening to their remonstrations against the British Government The halt of 5 days at their inducement

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1 Worsley (Adjutant General) to Thornhill (Military Secretary) 14 April 1809 HMS(I) Vol 594 No 15 Edmonstone to Ochterlony 29 April 1809 HMS(I) Vol 595 No 8 *fol* 73 98

2 Ochterlony to Commander in Chief 14 April 1809 and to Edmonstone 19 April 1809 (P) 10 12 (11)

3 Metcalfe No 66 6 February 1809 HMS(I) Vol 594 *fol* 5^>5 30 No 80 14 April, 1809 BSPC(I) 13 May, 1809 C1 paras 5 8

was unauthorised and contrary to the instructions of the Commander-in Chief and hence amounted to military insubordination Further, he had committed the folly of divulging to the Maharaja's agents, the secret instructions received by him from the Government of India [1] The Government, therefore, refused to treat the whole proceedings so lightly But when Ochterlony pleaded that an indulgent view of the matter he taken,[2] and the Resident at Delhi also pointed out that his removal from Ludhiana would deprive the post of a person of such ability and local knowledge,[3] the orders were reversed The Governor General in Council accepted the C-in-C's recommendation that the "error of judgment" shown by the commander had originated in the excess and not in the perversion of the spirit of his public zeal [4]

The detachment left Patiala on 5 February, reaching Nabha the same day The Nabha house, a branch of the *Phulkian* Misal and next in rank to Patiala, commanded great influence in the Malwa country Its ruler raja Jaswant Singh was a wise and moderate man and a great friend of Ranjit Singh, from whom he had received considerable grants during his first two Malwa campaigns He had won the approbation of Lord Lake in 1806, but had kept himself aloof from joining the deputation of Cis Sutlej sardars to Delhi in March 1808 The raja received Ochterlony with equal but more decorous satisfaction than Sahib Singh [5] He was, however, apprehensive of British interference, which would deprive him of Ranjit Singh s grants On 6 February he requested the commander that Nabha be taken under British protection and that a *jagir* should be granted to him Ochterlony tactfully informed him that the British detachment had not come to conquer new places and bestow them on chiefs but to secure them in their ancient possessions He further asked him to prove his friendship by joining him with his army [6]

After a day s halt at Nabha, the detachment proceeded to Amargarh reaching Malerkotla on 8 February At this place the commander was received by its Pathan ruler Ataullah Khan, on whom Ranjit Singh

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1 Edmonstone to Ochterlony, 13 March 1809 HMS(I) Vol 594 *fol* 525 *ff*
2 Ochterlony to Edmonstone, 25 May 1809 HMS(I) Vol 595 No 24
3 Seton to Carey, 29 May 1809 *op cit*
4 Edmonstone to Ochterlony 13 June 1809 BSPC(I) 15 June 1809 C17
5 Ochterlony to Edmonstone 18 February 1809 BSPC(I) 26 February 1809 C1 paras 6 7
6 Ochterlony to Edmonstone 9 February 1809 BSPC(I) 27 February 1809 C40 (P) 10 6 (5)

had levied a heavy contribution in ready money. Ochterlony reinstated the chief to his former authority The Patiala, Jind and Nabha chiefs agreed to remove their police posts from Malerkotla territory[1]

10 Establishment of Military Post

The British detachment arrived at Ludhiana on 18 February It took up a strong position with its rear to the town and a *nullah* covering its front and flank To the west of the town and on an eminence which completely commanded it and the northern and western faces, there was a fort, which though dilapidated, was an excellent place situated for head quarters It had now been decided that Ludhiana be maintained as a British post, and with the termination of Metcalfe's mission, the commander of the post would perform both military and political functions[2]

The arrival of the British detachment at Ludhiana coincided with the declaration by David Ochterlony, which was drafted on 9 February in accordance with the directions of the Government of India It announced to the Cis Sutlej chiefs, and in particular to those subordinate to the Maharaja, that a British army had arrived on the frontiers of Ranjit Singh with the sole object of confirmation of the long-standing British friendship with the State of Lahore on certain conditions. These were the evacuation of Lahore posts from the fortress of Kharar, Khanpur, and other places, which were to be restored to their original owners, and the withdrawal of all Sikh forces, particularly at Phillour to the other side of the Sutlej The Maharaja, it added, had agreed to fulfil these stipulations in the presence of Mr Metcalfe at Lahore The proclamation concluded significantly that in case of non-compliance with these stipulations, it would be considered that the Maharaja had no regard for British friendship and "the victorious British army shall commence every mode of defence"[3]

Shorn of all vagueness, the proclamation was an ultimatum of war if the State of Lahore showed its unwillingness to concede the British demands When Metcalfe confronted the Maharaja with it, he assured him that he should consider its contents to his real advantage affording a proof of British friendship Though the proclamation did not say,

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1 *Ibid*

2 *Ibid* Secret Committee *Memorandum* 80 HMS(I) Vol 511

3 Proclamation (*Ittilahnama*) under the seal of General St Leger, dated 9 February 1809 Ochterlony to Edmonstone, 9 February, 1809 BSPC(I) 27 February, 1809, C39 *Vide* Appendix No 2

except by implication, a word about British protection to the Malwa and Sirhind chiefs, it was made clear to the Maharaja that he will have to withdraw his troops to the right bank of the Sutlej, restore all conquests made by him during his third Malwa campaign, and abandon all claims of sovereignty over the Cis-Sutlej Sikh chiefs

Further negotiations, therefore, narrowed down to the discussion of minor details of drafting the treaty, as the Maharaja had prudently agreed to accept the British demands He ordered the withdrawal of his troops as required and agreed to relinquish his last acquisitions

11 Treaty of Amritsar

On 25 April, 1809, Ranjit Singh signed the Anglo Sikh treaty at Amritsar which provided for perpetual friendship between the British Government and the State of Lahore The British agreed to have no concern with the territories and subjects of the Maharaja to the north of the river Sutlej The State of Lahore bound itself not to commit any encroachments on the possessions of the Cis-Sutlej chiefs, or to maintain in its territories, more troops than were necessary for internal duties Any violation of these stipulations would render the treaty null and void [1]

Commenting on the whole transaction, the Secret Committee agreed with the Governor-General[2] that although Metcalfe's mission had failed to engage Ranjit Singh in a defensive alliance, information had been obtained about the Kingdom of Lahore, its military resources and the character of its ruler The extension of Ranjit Singh's power had been prevented , the limits of his possessions defined and fixed at a distance from the British frontier, and the Cis-Sutlej territories occupied by chieftains sensible of the benefit of British protection In an indirect way, it might justly be described as a defensive measure, for, it afforded protection to the Cis-Sutlej Siklis from Ranjit Singh's encroachments [3]

Politically, the treaty proved more advantageous to Ranjit Singh than to the English. It advanced the British frontier from the Jumna to the Sutlej and prevented the union of the Sikhs under an ambitious and astute ruler. But the establishment of peace and friendship with

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1 For treaty, *vide* Appendix No 3

2 Governor General to Secret Committee, 25 October, 1809 BISL(I)

3 Secret Committee's *Memorandum on Mission to Lahore*, 18 August, 1810 HMS(I), Vol 511, No 80, paras 43-44

the British allowed Ranjit Singh to consolidate his power in the Punjab, evolve a centralised system of government based on military despotism, build up and introduce European discipline into his armies, and pursue unhampered, his conquests to the north of the Indus The frontier on the Sutlej was a guarantee of peace with the British , it also provided a guarantee of British recognition to the powerful and independent Sikh State, which he had built up

12 Dialogue on Paramountcy

The treaty with Ranjit Singh having been signed and the Cis-Sutlej chiefs taken under British protection, the manner in which future British relations with Lahore and the Cis-Sutlej states were to be conducted were under constant discussion between Ludhiana, Delhi and Calcutta The protection assumed by the British Government over the chiefs between the Sutlej and the Jumna was both simple and complex Simple because the chiefs had accepted it , and complex because all the territories usurped by the Lahore Government had to be restored[1] Also, protection and restitution were both interlinked problems The latter, however, held the risk of alienating the protected chiefs,[2] who would be forced to surrender the territorial grants made to them by the Maharaja during the years 1806 8[3] It is relevant to examine the arguments which were advanced in official circles in the determination of a definite policy with respect to these questions

The right of British paramountcy was held to be a sequel to the Anglo Maratha treaty of December 1803, when Daulat Rao Sindhia ceded to the British Government, all countries to the north of Jaipur and Jodhpur Consequently, it was held that the East India Company had succeeded to the unquestionable right of such interference as the Sindhia had formerly exercised in the affairs of the Sikh chiefs between the Sutlej and the Jumna A demand for the restitution of Ranjit Singh's conquests prior to 1808 could, therefore, be made But, as these usurpations had taken place long before the British Government had declared its intention to interfere they had, to a certain degree received the sanction of time Moreover no application had been made by the dispossessed parties, hence, the Government was not bound to demand their surrender

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1 Ochterlony to Edmonstone 18 January 1809 BSPC(I) 6 February 1809 C1 paras 6 7

2 Seton to Ochterlony 23 January 1809 *op cit*

3 Edmonstone to Ochterlony 6 February 1809 BSPC(I) same date C52 also Seton to Ochterlony 23 February 1809

At the same time, it was feared that a demand for the restitution of all the conquests made by the Maharaja during his three Malwa campaigns would entail practical difficulties, because most of the protected chiefs were the beneficiaries of these conquests Lieut. Col Ochterlony, on whom fell the task of immediate restitution, felt uncertain whether to take retrospective view of Ranjit Singh's conquests and "his bountiful distribution of the property of others" Ranjit Singh, he argued, had been encroaching on these territories for a long time and had occasionally made grants of such conquests to his adherents The chiefs who had benefitted would naturally be averse to British adherence, while those who had suffered from such acquisitions would look forward to re-establish their rights [1] The territory of Roy Illias of Kot Jagraon and Ludhiana, as for an example, had been divided by Jind, Nabha and Ladwa chiefs and also by Sardar Fateh Singh Ahluwalia in different proportions, while a small portion was left to the widow of Roy Illias for personal expenses Since all the usurpations of Ranjit Singh had taken place after the British treaty with the Sindhia, he observed, that on the principle of justice a retrospective restitution be ordered [2] If this be done, he added, Ludhiana, a station most eligible for military position and of great use in future operations against Lahore would fall under British influence

Archibald Seton, the Resident at Delhi, who forwarded Ochterlony's views on the problem to the Government of India supported him unconditionally [3] The demand for the restitution of Ranjit Singh's conquests prior to 1808, he observed, could be made on the ground that as successor to the power of the Sindhia, the British Government had acquired since 1803, a right to interfere and prevent the encroachments of the Sikh chiefs upon each other The sardars who had solicited British protection in March 1808, had indirectly confirmed the right of the protecting power If, therefore, this right could be exercised during the *latter* portion of that period, it appeared consistent to exercise it during the former part also [4]

Seton's argument, though purely academic is, however, extremely fallacious Since Ahmad Shah Abdali's invasions, the Malwa and

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1 Ochterlony to Edmonstone 18 January, 1809 BSPC(I) 6 February 1809 Cl para 6

2 *Ibid* para 7

3 Seton to Edmonstone 23 January 1809 BSPC(I) 6 February, 1809

4 Seton to Ochterlony 23 January, 1809 BSPC(I) 6 February 1809,

Manjha countries had come under *de facto* Afghan suzerainty Patiala and other petty chiefs beyond Sirhind had become tributaries of Kabul and the Afghan governors of Lahore and Sirhind kept a vigilant eye on them If we further accept the douhtful investiture of Raojit Singh as ruler of Lahore in 1798 hy Shah Zaman as true, the ruler of Labore had acquired earlier than the British tbe title to paramountcy in the Cis-Sutlej area

The Government of India, however, did not accept these views The justice of the measure against retrospective restitution appeared to it more convincing The conquests of 1806 and 1807 had taken place before the British Government had declared its intention to interfere , at any rate, their restoration was not in contemplation when Metcalfe opened his negotiations with Ranjit Singh Tbese usurpations therefore be said to have received, to a certain degree, the sanction of time Moreover no application had been made by tbe dispossessed parties, hence the Britisb Government was not bound to demand their surrender In addition, the demand would be considered unfair to the Labore Government it might have the appearance of "retraction of an acquiescence so far given to it by the British Government [1]

A retrospective restitution was, therefore, ruled out In con sequence of this decision Ataullah Khan of Malerkotla was reinstated by Ochterlony in Febrjary 1809 [2] Bhag Siogh of Jind and Jodh Singh of Kalsia were directed to restore to the original owners, all lands usurped by Ranjit Singh and bestowed upon them [3] Ambala was surrendered by the Maharaja to rani Dia Kaur and the Jind and Kaithal rulers had to restore the territories they had been granted [4] A similar order was given to the Kalsia and Thanisar chiefs [5] While Ranjit Singh surrendered Faridkot to its owners he was also afforded aid in the recovery of certain conquests, which the original owners,[6] taking advantage of the advance of British troops had resumed [7]

13 Report on Sikh country

While decision to the partial restitution of Ranjit Singh [8]

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1 Edmonstone to Ochterlony 13 February 1809 BSPC(I) same date C19 also 27 February 1809 (P) 6 11 and 1 July 1809 (P) 6 19

2 O hterlony to Edmonstone 9 February 1809 (P) 10 6(5)

3 Edmonstone to O hterlony 13 February 1809 BSPC(I) same date C19

4 *Ibid* 27 February 1809 (P) 6 11

5 O hterlony to Edmonstone 6 July 1809 (P) 10(19)

6 *Ibid* (no date) No 10 (P) 10 11

7 Edmonstone to O hterlony, 1 July 1809 (P) 6 19

conquests had been arrived at, the exact nature of the relations of protection and dependence with the Cis Sutlej chiefs yet remained to he determined It was necessary to prepare a detailed statement of the revenue and military establishments of the Sikh states hetween the Jumna and the Sutlej The task having already heen entrusted to Ochterlony, he applied himself to it with great assiduity He took every opportunity of personal investigations and enquiries, employed Indian news-writers, held detailed conversations with the Cis-Sutlej chiefs, and after three months submitted a Paper to the Government of India embodying the results of his investigations[1] Ochterlony's *Report on the Sikh Country*, may he regarded as a first-hand detailed statement on the subject Its information collected so industrially, rich in detail and comprehensive proved of great value with regard to the possessions, power and dispositions of the different chiefs between the Jumna nnd the Sutlej His observntions and suggestions in an accompanying note on the fundamental principles of British policy towards the Cis-Sutlej states were ultimately approved by the Govern ment of India and implemented in the shape of *Ittilahnamas* (Precepts) to the chiefs taken under British protection[2]

The exnct nature of the relations of protection and dependence were also based on Ochterlony's Report on the Cis Sutlej country, which covered a detailed statement of the revenue and militnry resources of the Sikh states between the Jumna and the Sutlej[3]

Briefly, the Report surveyed the power, resources and military strength of 38 Cis Sutlej states-with annual revenues ranging from 5, 000 rupees (*viz*, Charauk, Mamdot and Pukke) to 610 000 rupees (*viz*, Patiala, the largest state in the region, possessing 2,000 cavalry and 1,000 infantry) The annual revenue and military strength of other important states were as follows Kaithal- 225 000 rupees, cavalry 600 Nabha- 150,000 rupees, cavalry 400 Jind- 125,000, cavalry 600 Malerkotla- 40,000 rupees; cavalry 400 Ladwa- 150, 000 rupees, cavalry 1,000 The largest cavalry force (2 000) was that maintained hy Patiala and the smallest hy Bundi (150), Dakhari (40) and Talwandi Majooke (25) The entire revenue resources of the region were estimated at 2, 584, 000 rupees and the military strength

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1 Ochterlony to Edmonstone 17 March 1809 HMS(I) Vol 594 No 31

2 Edmonstone to Ochterlony 10 April 1809 HMS I) Vol 594 No 32

3 For the *Report on the Sikh Country* and *Statement of Ranjit Singh Con quests and Grants vide* BSPC(I) 29 July, 1809 C3 and C4

at 1400 infantry and 11,450 horse[1] These estimates, however, seem to he grossly inaccurate. Lieutenant White, who surveyed the country between the Jumna and the Sutlej in the same year (1809), computed the revenues of the region at 4,247,922 rupees and military force at 24,959[2]

The Statement on the conquests and grants by Ranjit Singh during his three Malwa Campaigns discloses that an area with an aproximate annual revenue of 400 518 rupees was taken possession of by him His territorial grants included those to Bhag Singh of Jind worth an annual revenue of 42,515 rupees, to Gurdit Singh of Ladwa 23,790 rupees, to Jaswant Singh of Nabha- 32,240 rupees, to Fateh Singh Ahluwalia- 54,295 rupees, and to Diwan Muhkam Chand- 154,235 rupees[3]

In an accompanying note to the Report, Ochterlony outlined his observations, which he recommended, should form the basis of British policy towards the protected Sikh states The condition of protection and dependence, he observed, should he determined without any further delay Protection to the Cis-Sutlej states would he advantageous to the British It would result in the ready co-operation of at lenst 5,000 irregular cavalry, which would ohviate the necessity of maintaining a large British force at Meerut It would also place the resources of the Sikh country at the disposal of the Indian Government But, he warned the Government, that the financial resources of the Sikh chiefs did not admit of any pecuniary contribution in return of protection

The measures suggested, included a declared exemption of the states from payment of trihute, a declaration of non-interference in their internal affairs, the prevention of inter-state encroachments, and the admission of the right of the protecting power to requisition the military resources of the state in case of an invasion of their country.[4] These measures, he concluded, would allow the protected chiefs the uncontrolled exercise of their power within their territories, preventing them at the same time, from preying upon each other's territory. The British Government would, ultimately, derive advantages far greater in value than any pecuniary contributions could possibly ndmit.[5]

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1 Ochterlony to Edmonstone, 17 March 1809 BSPC(I) 25 July, 1809 C3
2. White to Seton 7 October, 1809 (P) 2 143
3 Ochterlony to Edmonstone, 17 March, 1809-BSPC(I) 25 July, 1809 C4
4. *Ibid* para 10
5 *Ibid.* para 15.

The Governor-General-in Council considered that the Report contained valuable information and Ochterlony s suggestions were taken into account in the determination of the policy they finally adopted On the assumption that the necessity of protecting the Cis Sutlej chiefs arose out of the incompatibility of their own interests with Ranjit Singh, it was taken for granted, that they desired to become independent of the ruler of Lahore, and dependent upon the British Government Reciprocal obligations had, therefore, to be evolved, as far example, the prevention of the extension of Ranjit Singh s power beyond the Sutlej, and the full co operation of the protected chiefs in the measures directed towards it It was, however, not intended to place the protected chiefs in absolute dependence upon the British Government The British were to have a right to demand their co operation in any military measures undertaken for the defence of their country By virtue of the permanent protection afforded to them, the protecting power s right to demand such co operation, however, would not be dependent upon the concurrence of the protected states Apart from this right, it was not considered desirable to have any interest in the mutual concerns of the Sikh chieftains, for, any interference in their dissentions and disputes would be embarrassing and vexatious [1]

14 The *Ittilahnama*

On these cautiously restricted and ambiguously worded general principles, Ochterlony was directed to promulgate a Declaration, which the Governor-General in Council had approved On 3 May, 1809, Ochterlony announced to the chiefs an *Ittilahnama* (Precept) containing the conditions of protection which included an assurance of permanent protection from the authority and control of Ranjit Singh , their exemption from the payment of tribute , and the continued exercise of the same rights and authority they had hitherto enjoyed within the limits of their respective possessions The British were to be allowed to station troops in their territories if necessary , and full co operation if their territories were invaded Finally, all European articles brought for the use of the army were to be exempted from duty [2]

The protection granted to the Cis Sutlej states ended their independent relations with the British But sooner than anticipated, their

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1 Edmonstone to Ochterlony, 10 April 1809 HMS(I), Vol 594, No 32 paras 2 11

2 For the Declaration dated 3 May 1809 HMS(I) Vol 595, No 28 *vide* Appendix No 4

mutual jealousies and recrimations against each other came to surface, and claims on border territories, usurpations and seizures of disputed estates became a common feature[1] Although it was not the intention of the Governor-General in Council to subject the Cis Sutlej states to absolute subordination, yet it became evident, that their relations among themselves must needs be regulated Consequently, to prevent the protected states from preying upon the territories of each other, another Proclamation was promulgated *on* 22 August, 1809, which declared them protected singly against one another, as well as collectively against the State of Lahore It warned them that any unlawful encroachments and seizure of the estates of others would entail British interference, and that the offending party would be required to restore the seized property and pay the cost *of restitution* Failure to comply with the orders *in* this respect would compel the British Government to impose a penalty according to the circumstances on the offender[2]

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1 For the correspondence on the subject, *vide* Edmonstone to Ochterlony, 10 April 1809, *op cit* and Metcalfe to Edmonstone 17 June 1809 BSPC(I)

2 For the *Proclamation of Protection to Cis Sutlej States against One Another*, dated 22 August, 1809-HMS(I), Vol 595, *vide* Appendix No 5

CHAPTER VII

POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, 1809—1830

1 The Treaty of Friendship

The Anglo Sikh treaty signed on 25 April, 1809 provided for perpetual friendship between the British Government and the State of Lahore The British agreed to have no concern with the territories and subjects of the Maharaja to the north of the river Sutlej The State of Lahore bound itself not to commit any encroachments on the possessions of the Cis-Sutlej chiefs, or to maintain in its own territories, more troops than were necessary for internal duties Any violation of these stipulations would render the treaty null and void

Politically, the treaty proved more advantageous to Ranjit Singh Between the years 1809 and 1830 he had added to his dominion the provinces of Multan (1818), Kashmir (1819) the Derajat (1819 20) and Peshawar (1823) He had extended his power nearer to Sind and Shikarpur The frontier on the Sutlej was a guarantee of peace with the British, it also provided a guarantee of British recognition to the powerful and independent Sikh State, which he had built up Metcalfe had predicated in 1809, that in 20 years Ranjit Singh would reap the fruits of his alliance with the British And in 1827, the Maharaja admitted the truth of his statement [1]

2 Mutual Distrust

Though the treaty of friendship had been signed, suspicions on both sides lingered Confidence, however, is a plant of slow growth At first, political relations between the English and Ranjit Singh exhibited a certain amount of distrust and suspicion The actual presence of a British force had compelled Ranjit Singh to resign his pretensions of sovereignty over the whole country between the rivers Jumna and the Sutlej The establishment of a military post at Ludhiana not only marked the boundary of his ambitions, but also constituted a possible threat to his considerable possessions beyond the river Although gradually he became reconciled to it, his suspicions had led him to fortify the strong post of Phillour, a few miles from Ludhiana On the other hand, the British considered him capable of

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1 Wade to Metcalfe 1 August 1827 BPC(I) 12 October 1827 C3 para 59,

taking advantage of any opportunity to recover his lost power[1] Lord Minto even went so far as to accuse Ranjit Singh, though without any positive justification, of carrying on intrigues with the Marathas.[2]

The existence of a Sikh-Maratha intrigue against the British was, to some extent the result of earlier imaginary reports of Brookes, the British Agent at Benares In June 1808, Brookes had alleged that one Kore Singh had brought secret letters from Lahore to Amrit Rao[3] The correspondence was submitted to Calcutta and the Government had ordered Edmonstone, the Chief Secretary to examine it Edmonstone found Kore Singh an imposter and the letters bearing the seal of Ranjit Singh as forgeries[4] Late in may 1809, Lieutenant Close, the Resident with Sindhia discovered the existence of another conspiracy between Ranjit Singh and Daulat Rao Sindhia.[5] He produced a communication of Ranjit Singh dated 11 April, 1809, in which the Sikh ruler had proposed an alliance to the Maratha for "the extirpation" of their common enemy, "the nefarious tribe of the English"[6] These negotiations, it was alleged, were being carried on through one Gurdial Misar, "a dismissed cook, formerly employed by Sindhia" Gurdial Misar, it seems, had come to Lahore in February 1809 and nobody believed that he had been deputed by Sindhia or Surji Rao Ghatika to negotiate with Ranjit Singh Close had earlier pronounced him a Punjabi adventurer at large[7] Metcalfe had considered it unlikely that a person of this type would bave been chosen by Sindhia for an intrigue of this nature[8] Considerable correspondence, however, passed between the Delhi Residency and the Government of India both of whom had taken the remours seriously, and the military authorities had considered it necessary to occupy Hansi to forestall a Maratha-Sikh coalition[9] Gurdial Misar was ultimately found to be an imposter and nothing came out of the supposed intrigue

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1 Metcalfe No 90 2 June 1809 HMS(I), Vol 545 No 40, para 10

2 Minto to Ranjit Singh, 3 June, 1809-BSPC(I) same date, C14

3 For early Ranjit Singh Maratha correspondence see BSPC(I) 27 May, 1809, C3 and 9 and also HMS(I) Vol, 592

4 Edmonstone s *Memorandum on Ranjit Singh's intrigues with Amrit Rao*-BSPC(I) 29 August 1808 Vol 209 C29 30

5 Close to Government, 24 May, 1839 BSPC(I) 27 May 1809, C3

6 For correspondence on the subject, see BSPC(I) 6 May, 1809 C5 7.

7 BSPC(I) 13 March 1809, C63

8 Metcalfe to Seton 22 February, 1809 (P) II, 123.

9. Carey (Military Secretary to C in C) to Resident Delhi, 10 March, 1809-(P) II, 130.

The period of distrust lasted till 1812, but gradually, both the English and the Sikhs began to gain confidence in each other's friendship British non interference in the schemes of Sikh expansion and their disinterestedness in dealings with Kabul and the exiled king Shah Shuja, ultimately convinced Ranjit Singh of the good faith of the English [1] On their part, the British Government rejected the overtures of the governor of Multan [2] of rani Sada Kaur[3] and the propositions of rani Ram Kaur of Ambala for support in a combination of the subordinate Punjab chiefs against Ranjit Singh [4] Similar overtures made by the Amir of Kabul were also not listened to [5] Gradually, minor misunderstandings began to be removed and inter state matters discussed between the two governments through diplomatic channels

3 Ludhiana Agency

The establishment of the Ludhiana Political Agency is of the utmost importance in the growth and development of Anglo-Sikh relations From April 1809 the Ludhiana Military Post served as channel of British political and diplomatic relations with the State of Lahore The office of Agent to the Governor General was created in 1810, and till then, interesting details are connected with the transformation of the town of Ludhiana into a British Agency

Originally, Ludhiana was seized by Ranjit Singh during his early Malwa campaigns and bestowed upon his uncle, Bhag Singh of Jind When the British detachment occupied it temporarily in 1809, it was considered that after the termination of Metcalfe s mission for some time, the commander of the Post would perform both military and political functions [6] From the very beginning Ochterlony had realised its strategic value and had advocated its retention as a permanent military post on the grounds that the proximity of British troops to the Lahore frontier would be convenient [7] In the meantime, Bhag Singh expressed a desire to exchange Ludhiana for Karnal or Panipat [8] Both

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1 See generally Ochterlony to Government 20 January 1810 (P)10 47 18 and 6 February 1810 (P) 10-94A 50 22 March 1810 (P) 10 53

2 Edmonstone to Ochterlony 28 December 1810 (P) 6 67

3 *Ibid*

4 *Ibid* 9 October 1810 (P) 6 57

5 Metcalfe (Resident at Delhi) to Ochterlony 12 February 1812-(P) 7 50

6 *Government to Ochterlony 13 March 1809 HMS(I) Vol 594*

7 Ochterlony to Seton 1 March 1809 (P) 10 100

8 Memorial of Raja Bhag Singh BSPC(I) 20 March 1809 C27

Ochterlony, the commander of the Post, and Seton, the Resident at Delhi, considered the exchange highly desirable if the Post was ever to become permanent[1] The Government of India, however, did not approve of the proposition because it would have aroused Ranjit Singh's distrust of British intentions, and considering the Post to be temporary, allowed Bhag Singh 500 rupees per mensem as compensation till the British troops evacuated it[2]

In May 1809 the Government of India decided to withdraw the British detachment from Ludhiana both on moral and political grounds moral because the Governor General had given a personal assurance to Ranjit Singh that the conclusion of the treaty would make the continued stationing of the detachment at Ludhiana unnecessary[3] Politically, it was feared that the retention of the military post would lead to undue interference in the concerns of the protected Cis Sutlej states The proposed withdrawal of British troops from Ludhiana was, however, strongly objected to by the British officials concerned with Cis-Sutlej affairs—Ochterlony, Seton and Metcalfe They considered the maintenance of the military post at Ludhiana essential for the security of British interests[4] Metcalfe wrote a lengthy paper on the subject, outlining the evil consequences which would result from a precipitate withdrawal He pointed out that the presence of British troops on the Sutlej not only gave confidence to the protected chiefs but also kept a local check over the actions of Ranjit Singh A hasty withdrawal would remove an ostensible barrier between the protected chiefs and Ranjit Singh, it would appear as a reversal of British policy, highly injurious to the reputation of the British Government[5] For these reasons, and also from the fear that after a hasty withdrawal of British troops from Ludhiana Ranjit Singh might seize it and convert it into a military cantonment, the Government reversed its decision and Ludhiana was retain d as a British military post till its conversion into a Political Agency in 1810

Major General David Ochterlony, Agent to the Governor General

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1 Seton 24 February 1809 Ochterlony 18 February and 1 March 1809-BSPC(I) 4 April 1809 C42

2. Government to Ochterlony 3 June 1809 HMS(I) Vol 595 Government to Seton 3 June 1809 *op cit* No 29

3 Minto to Ranjit Singh 3 June 1809 BSPC(I) 3 June 1809 C4 also HMS (I) Vol 595 No 7

4 Ochterlony 6 May, 1809 BSPC(I) 3 June 1809 C24

5 Metcalfe to Government, 2 June 1809 HMS(I) Vol 595 No 40

at Ludhiana held that office till July 1815 He possessed considerable experience of Sikh affairs he was incharge of the Delhi Residency during the British expedition against Sikh depredations in the Doab (1804-5) and had led in 1808, the British force to the Sutlej during Metcalfe's negotiations at Lahore At heart Ochterlony was anti Sikh he was suspicious of the loyalty of the protected Cis Sutlej chiefs and also of the ambitions of Ranjit Singh Extremely officious and overbearing he often over-estimated his authority, and in his relations with the Lahore Government, he failed to establish the amicability enjoined upon by the treaty of 1809 And yet, he was a capable officer and administrator, and notwithstanding his lack of tact in handling political relations with Lahore, his contribution towards building up the Ludhiana Political Agency, is considerable

Ochterlony had three Assistants—Birch, Ross and Murray In 1815, the sub agencies of Nahan and Sabathu were created to cope with the political work in the hill states, and the Agent's designation was changed to the Superintendent of Political Affairs and Agent to the Governor-General in the Territories of Protected Sikh and Hill Chiefs between the Jumna and the Sutlej The same year the Agent's office was shifted to Karnal which was considered a central place between Delhi, Ludhiana and the hill sub agencies In 1822 it was removed to Ambala [1]

4 Sundry transactions

Early Sikh distrust of British intentions was to a certain extent removed during Ranjit Singh's occupation of Kot Kangra and his Multan expedition In September 1809, the Sikhs seized Kot Kangra by an artifice from Sansar Chand Katoch and foiled the Gurkha attempts to take possession of it [2] The Nepalese general Amar Singh Thapa, after a vain proposal to Ranjit Singh for the partition of Kashmir and Kangra Hills,[3] applied to the British for assistance against the Sikhs [4] The British Government rejected these overtures showed its disapprobation of the Patiala ruler's desire to help Amar Singh Thapa, and assured the Cis-Sutlej chiefs that Ranjit Singh had no designs on their territories [5] When after some time, the Lahore

1 Resident at Delhi to Ross 16 January 1822 (P) 22 5

2 Seton to Edmonstone 23 September 1809 (P) 3 58

3 This was disclosed by Ranjit Singh to Wade in 1831 see Wade to Government-BPC(I) 1 July 1831 Vol 30 C43 para 7

4 Ochterlony to Lushington 16 December 1809 (P) 2 160

5 *Ibid* 22 December 1809 (P) 3 58

Government complained of the Nepalese designs against its tributaries, it was held that Ranjit Singh may be allowed to cross the Sutlej and attack the Gurkhas [1]

Similarly the complaints of Nawab Muzzafar Khan of Multan against the Lahore Government were not listened to [2] In August 1810, it was anticipated that Ranjit Singh would make an indirect approach to the British for a joint march on Multan Early in the year, the Maharaja had besieged the capital, but the stubborn resistance shown by the beleaguered governor, had made him retire unsuccessfully [3] The fact that during the siege, Muzzafar Khan had sought British help, gave an impression to the Ludhiana Agent that Ranjit Singh would also make a similar attempt Soon afterwards, proposals for a joint conquest of Multan were made, in a manner, which led Ochterlony to suggest to the Government the advisability of a revision of the treaty with Ranjit Singh [4] The Government, however, directed its Agent to reject Ranjit Singh's application for British co-operation in his meditated attack on Multan [5]

5 Report from Lahore

Ochterloy's visit to Lahore in February 1812,[6] in connection with the marriage of the Maharaja's son Kharak Singh, is illustrative of the growing confidence with which both the English and the Sikhs began to see each other After the celebration of marriage at Amritsar, Ranjit Singh invited the Ludhiana Agent to visit Lahore [7] Ochterlony accepted the invitation, and while at Lahore, he was shown the fortifications of the city and the defensive works in the fort The Maharaja, it seemed, was keen to earn British goodwill, though the local sardars grew apprehensive and cautioned him not to allow the British Agent to inspect the city fortifications. Ranjit Singh did not pay any attention to these remonstrations [8]

In his report to the Government, Ochterlony has made interesting observations on Ranjit Singh's power, policy and politics He found the Maharaja a little depressed at his failure at Multan and his mind

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1 Edmonstone to Ochterlony 4 October, 1811 (P) 7 37
2. *Ibid* 28 December, 1810 (P) 6 67.
3 Seton to Government, 16 March, 1810 (P) 37
4 Ochterlony to Government, 13 August, 1810 (P) 10-72
5 Government to Ochterlony, 25 September, 1810-(P) 6 54
6 Ochterlony to Government 23 January, 1812-(P) 12 39 UT, II, 122 *ff*.
7 *Ibid* 27 February, 1812 (P) 12 42 UT, II 126 *ff*
8 Latif, p 391

bent on an attempt to conquer Kashmir Ranjit Singh's ambition, he reported, was as unbounded as his rapacity He had quite a formidable army The Sikh chiefs were subservient to him, discontented but powerless to rise against him This, be observed, was due to the Maharaja's confidence that the British would not interfere But for this belief, there might have been a union of the malcontents against him [1]

Continuing, Ochterlony remarked that Ranjit Singh's friendly policy towards the British Government was based on fear and distrust. " If Runjeet's opinions are decisively formed on any one subject, they are on his utter inability to contend with British arms, but the more firm this belief, the more he is inclined to doubt the pacific intentions of the British Government, whose forbearance to him is incomprehensible "[2]

Ochterlony also proposed that the Government of India should propose to the Maharaja "a military conjunction" for repelling any future invaders from Europe [3] For this, he received from Calcutta a mild though well merited rebuke He was told that the political connection with the State of Lahore, at that moment, was not susceptible to any further improvement; that the success of his proposition was highly doubtful, and that, there was hardly any necessity for the change of political relations with the Maharaja, which tended to a progressive confirmation of his confidence in the British Government [4]

Ochterlony's despatches from Ludhiana exhibit an unreasonable obsession on his part that Ranjit Singh's schemes of expansion would, sooner or later, bring the Lahore Government into conflict with British power The supposed overtures of the *Qiladar* (fort commander) of Lahore are illustrative of this tendency In June 1814, two extraordinary letters were received by the British Agent from Hukam Singh, the commandant of the Lahore fort These informed Ochterlony of the universal discontent which prevailed among the principal sardars at Lahore, who were anxious to seek British protection and throw off Ranjit Singh's yoke [5] The letters proved to be forgeries, but Ochterlony reacted to the information He reported to his Government that the western Sikh chiefs might desert Ranjit Singh on account of his

1 Ochterlony to Government 27 February, 1812 (P) 12 42
2 *Ibid* para 8
3 *Ibid* para 11
4 Government to Ochterlony, 20 March 1812 (P) 7 53
5 Ochterlony to Government, 6 June, 1814-(P) 13 72

unprincipled ambitions, and that sooner or later, the British Government would think it proper to extend the existing system of protection to the banks of the Attock [1] The time, he said, would soon arrive, when Ranjit Singh's successes elsewhere would lead him to believe that he would also be successful in a war with the English [2]

6 Anomalies of jurisdiction

Ludhiana lost its political importance when in October 1815, the office of the Agent to the Governor-General was removed to Karnal In November 1816, Lieutenant W Murray was appointed Assistant to the Agent at Ludhiana, mainly to look after the refugee Afghan families and to perform other local duties Murray held that office till 1823, when he was appointed Superintendent and Agent of the Ambala Agency and Claude Wade took charge of the Ludhiana Sub Agency Wade remained at Ludhiana for 17 years as Assistant to the Agent (1823 27) Political Assistant (1827—32) and then as Political Agent (1832—40) In his relations with the Sikh Government, Wade balanced the interests of the two states in such a manner that, in due course, he became an old and intimate friend of Ranjit Singh [3]

Ambala, as the headquarters of the Superintendent of Sikh and Hill Affairs, was the principal British agency vested with the control of all Cis and Trans Sutlej affairs till 1827 Ludhiana continued to be in the charge of an Assistant for local administrative matters The position soon became anomalous While Ludhiana was directly under the control of the Delhi Residency, it had to take orders from Ambala when dealing with Lahore or the Cis Sutlej states [4] But the Sikh Government represented that as Ludhiana was situated nearer Lahore, it was convenient for the settlement of disputes and particularly the adjustment of its claims in the Cis Sutlej area It was also pointed out by the Darbar, that as Ambala safeguarded the interests of the protected states, the Lahore Government's territorial disputes with them could not with any propriety be entrusted to that office[5] It had further been noticeable that political officers at Ambala and Ludhiana squabbled over their official status and even disagreed on political matters Repeated altercations and angry collisions on matters of

1 *Ibid* para 10
2 *Ibid* para 9
3 UT, III p 235 *ff*
4 Elliot to Murray 9 October, 1823 (P) 23 163
5 Wade to Metcalfe 3 December, 1826-(P) 95-47

jurisdiction and the exercise of authority occurred between Murray and Wade [1]

This difference of opinion and overlapping of political and administrative matters between Ambala and Ludhiana was, in fact, the result of their vaguely defined functions, jurisdiction and authority As both were empowered to deal with Lahore Cis Sutlej territorial disputes, it led to dual control over the protected states and created confusion in political relations with the Sikh Government It had become essential to separate the duties involved in the supervision of the protected states from British relations with Lahore and the adjustment of the latter's territorial claims on the left bank of the Sutlej [2]

In 1827, as a result of these representations, Ambala's jurisdiction over the protected states was made supreme Ludhiana was vested with authority to deal with the disputed Cis Sutlej territorial possessions of the Lahore Government and to conduct all political relations with the Darbar [3] The Resident at Delhi was authorised to determine the exact nature of jurisdiction in case of dispute

In 1832, the Political Assistant at Ludhiana was given the designation of Political Agent and the functions of Ambala and Ludhiana were further clarified In 1838, Ambala was vested with the supervision of the Lahore dependencies in the Cis-Sutlej area Ludhiana was to deal with all political relations with the Lahore Government, the affairs of the Punjab beyond the Sutlej and the Indus [4] Three years later the designation of the Ludhiana Political Agent was changed to that of Agent to the Governor General, North-West Frontier [5]

7 Years of distrust

The years between 1820 and 1825 may well be described as those of undue distrust on the part of British the realisation of which made Ranjit Singh complain to Lord Amherst in October 1823, that the local officials on the frontier and the Delhi Residency might be instructed to conduct themselves towards his government in a spirit of cordiality [6] For sometime disconcerting reports had reached Delhi both from

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1 Stirling to Hawkins (Enclosure) 29 January 1830 (P) 50 22

2 Wade to Metcalfe 3 December 1826 (P) 95 47

3 Colebrooke to Murray and Wade 9 December 1827 (P) 27 289 and 115.27 respectively

4 Macnaghten to Clerk 23 July 1838 (P) 38 40

5 Clerk to Metcalfe 20 January, 1841-(P) 83 168

6 Ranjit Singh to Governor General BPC(I) 24 October 1823 C81

Ludhiana and Ambala. The Wadni crisis in July 1822 and the expulsion of Lahore forces from that place had probably created bitterness in the mind of the Maharaja.[1] Murray from Ambala and Wade from Ludhiana had been sending reports containing information regarding warlike preparations at Lahore; of the growing influence of Raajit Singh's French officers at the Darbar; and of the intrigues of Begum Samru and the Raja of Bharatpur with the Sikh ruler.[2]

As there was nothing substantial in these reports, they failed to gain any impression on the Government of India. It was not feared that the military preparations of the Maharajt would produce an Anglo-Sikh conflict "Reliance was placed," wrote the Governor-General, "on the moderation and political sagacity of our neighbour."[3]

About the same time, various states made overtures to the British for a combination against the Sikh ruler. Thus the Sindhian Amirs made proposals for an intimate alliance[4] Several chiefs of Afghanistan and also of Kashmir made applications that if British aid against Ranjit Singh's ambitions were refused to them, they would be obliged to look towards Russia.[5] There was, however, no response from the British Government. They were told that the British relations with the State of Lahore under the treaty of 1809, made it improper for the British to help them. The Resident at Delhi was cautioned not to entertain in future any such complaints or to hold out the smallest hope of assistance. "The consenting of even momentarily," wrote the Governor-General to the Secret Committe, "to entertain invitations of British interference in trans-Sutlej polities ran the risk of exciting the jealousy and alarm of the Lahore Government."[6]

In 1823 Murray, the Ambala Agent, made a tour through the protected Sikh states and invited the attention of the Government of India to the importance of the occupation of Ferozepur. Situated near the confluence of the Sutlej and the Beas, it possessed manifold military advantages over Ludhiana. On account of its strategic position, Murray described it as "the key to India," and reported that

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1 See *infra*, p 114

2. *Vide* Murray to Ross, 20 and 30 July, 1822-(P) 93 100 and 104. Wade to Elliot, 7 August, 1823, Wade to Murray, 5 October, 1825-(I) 94 105.

3 Governor General to Secret Committee, 1 November, 1824-BISL(I). Vol. 20.

4 BSC(I)-31 October, 1823, C5 8.

5 *Ibid* 9 April, 1824, C55

6 Governor General to Secret Committee, 1 November, 1824-BISL(I). Vol. 20, para 13.

the town belonged to a widow of the Buriya family, who seemed inclined to exchange it for territory near the Jumna[1] The political and military importance of Ferozepur was realised but it was feared that its occupation would create alarm in Ranjit Singh's mind At the same time, it was decided that Ranjit Singh should on no account, be allowed to take possession of it "

These and various other reports against Ranjit Singh did not impress the Home Government Though it became conscious of the Sikh ruler's ambitions towards Sind and Afghanistan, yet any hostile intentions on his part were considered improbable Reports of his intrigues with Begum Samru and Appa Sahib appeared to be false, and the increasing influence of the French officers at Lahore was frowned upon The Government of India was advised, that notwithstanding the recognition of the importance of Ferozepur as a military post it would be imprudent to occupy it[3]

8 Territorial disputes

The separation of the respective functions of Ambala and Ludhiana Agencies in 1827, raised the question of the latter's jurisdiction over certain territories on the left bank of the existing indefinite Sutlej frontier Discussions arose as to the relative right of the Lahore Government to those districts south of the river Sutlej which had so far remained a subject of indecision A general rule had been laid down in 1811, that the Cis Sutlej estates of these chiefs, for which no service or tribute was paid to Ranjit Singh, were under the protection of the British Government[4] But the matter had to be referred to the Lahore Government, with the result, that it submitted a claim of supremacy over 47 Cis Sutlej territories on various grounds The list included Wadni, Jagraon Naraingarh, the Kang and Ahluwalia possessions, Ferozepur, Sailba, Machiwara, Anandpur and Chamkur[5]

The problem was not a new one, but, it required a definite

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1 For correspondence see BPC(I) 30 January, 1824 C43-45

2 Ibid 14 May 1824 C18 In May 1835 Fero epur was declared lapsed to the British Government The claims of the Lahore Government over the territory were rejected mainly because of its strategical importance.

3 Select Despatches Comm ttee Papers and Correspondence (I) 3 August 1825 Vol 4 paras 1 14

4 Edmonstone to O hterlony 22 November 1811 (P) 7 40

5 Murray to Colebrooke 18 De ember 1827 (P) 74 202 Colebrooke to Wad 17 March 1828 (P) 115 39

determination of either a right of British protection or of Lahore supremacy After long discussions between Ambala, Ludhiana and the Delhi Residency, it was decided that Ranjit Singh should not be allowed to increase his influence over those Cis-Sutlej areas, where his right had been denied or had been held of dubious value. On the other hand, the right of British protection should not be stretched too far to excite his alarm or impair the existing goodwill and friendship between the two governments [1]

(i) *Wadni*

The varied nature of these claims did not permit of a general rule, but cases had to be decided on merit. In the case of Wadni, which had belonged to the Maharaja's mother-in-law, rani Sada Kaur, a serious crisis had arisen in 1822 Two years earlier, Ranjit Singh had imprisoned her and revoked the unconditional grant made in 1808 The Government of India had considered the seizure of Wandi unjustified, for, it was believed that Sada Kaur as the head of the *Kanhaya* Misal, in her own right, was not only independent of Lahore suzerainty, but had also claim on British protection Consequently, the Sikh forces were expelled from the fort by the Ambala Agent, and the same year, on the death of the rani, her possessions were declared to have escheated to the British Government.[2]

The matter of Wadni was reopened by the Lahore Government in 1827 along with its other claims. It was represented that the rani's territories could not be considered under British protection, for, in her relations with the British, she had always acted through the Lahore Government. Further, Lahore forces had been allowed in 1817 to restore her authority. She had, therefore, virtually relinquished her claim to Wadni in favour of her son in-law. On these grounds, the Maharaja's claim of sovereignty over Wadni was admitted [3]

(ii) *Ahluwalia possessions*

The Ahluwalia possessions presented a case of the temporary defection of Sardar Fateh Singh Ahluwalia, who for twenty years had been a servant of the Lahore Government He held jagirs on both sides of the river Sutlej granted to him by the Maharaja In 1825, he

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1 *Ibid* Wade to Clerk, 10 January, 1828 (P) 96-4

2. For correspondence on the subject, see generally, Murray to Ross, 20, 22 and 26 June 3 July, 1822-(P) 93 73, 77,78 and 83

3 For the Wadni Case, see Wade to Colebrooke, 7 December, 1827 (P) 95-136 Colebrooke to Wade, 28 April, 1828 (P) 115 36 and Colebrooke to Murray, 19 December, 1828 (P) 28 236

fled across the Sutlej and sought British protection.[1] A declaratioo of protection in his favour, it was argued, would amount to a British guarantee of his possessions on the right bank of the Sutlej The principle followed in this case was a compromise His right to British protection, so far as his ancestral possessions or those acquired on a footing of equality with Raojit Singh were concerned, was confirmed But no such right could he extended to his trans-Sutlej possessions, in respect of which the right of the Lahore Government to their confiscation was admitted.[2]

In 1827 Fateh Singh returned to Lahore. The Lahore Government preferred a claim of suzerainty over his possessions in the Cis Sutlej region. It was pointed out that after his return to Lahore, he had voluatarily become a depeodent of the Lahore Government, and that the guarantee of protection in his favour was not binding on the Maharaja These arguments were rejected by the British Government. It was held, that the Ahluwalia Cis-Sutlej possessions had been under British protection since 1809, and that a mere disavowal by Fateh Singh could oot render these territories indepcndent of protection and its obligations The sovereignty of the Lahore Governmcnt over Naraingarh aod Jagraon, which the chief had obtained as a grant from Ranjit Singh was, however, admitted [3]

(*iii*) *Kong possessions*

Io the similar case of the Kang possessions, however, a cootrary decision was tal en In 1824 Hari Singh Kang had left Lahore service and fled ioto British territory He hoped that his Cis-Sutlej possessions would entitle him to British protection The Ambala Agent recommended that since he had solicited protection of his own free will the same should he granted to him, so far as his Cis Sutlej territories were concerned. The Lahore Government, however, objected to this procedure. It represented that the Kang's ancestors had been its tributaries in the past, having no claim on British protection ; and that as an avowed vassal of the Maharaja, Hari Singh could not relinquish at will his dependence on the State of Lahore [4]

These views were accepted by the Resident at Delhi It was held

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1 Wade to Metcalfe, 27, 29 December, 1825 (P) 94 116, 118

2 Metcalfe to Murray, 14 January, 1826 (P) 26 12.

3 Colebrooke to Murray, 21 March, 19 December, 1828 (P)28 60, 326

4 For correspondence on the subject, see Elliot to Murray, 11 November 1824 (P) 24 215 Murray to Elliot, 19 November, 1824-(P) 72 219,

that prior to 1824 Hari Singh Kang had no intention of taking advantage of British protection or discharging the obligations of allegiance Any British right to supremacy over his Cis Sutlej possessions had thus been allowed to become dormant On Hari Singh s death in 1828 therefore the Lahore Government s right to declare his possessions escheat was not interfered with [1]

(iv) *Other territories*

Similar principles were followed in the case of Mumdot and Ramunuwala as also in the Sailba territories The former estates were held by Qutub ud Din of Kasur for having rendered military service to the Maharaja prior to 1809 In 1826 Qutub ud Din applied for British protection and the Lahore Government contested the Pathan s right to do so Though Murray the Ambala Agent held that by virtue of their being situated on the south of the Sutlej the estates were under British protection, the Resident at Delhi reversed the order [2]

In the case of Dewa Singh of Sailha however, the claim of the Lahore Government was rejected It was found that the Jagirdar s ancestors had held the estate in their own right free of any obligations to the Darbar Although Dewa Singh had taken service under the Lahore Government this could not transform him into a vassal subject of that state [3]

While in the case of Machiwara[4] the claim of the Lahore Government was admitted because its chief Sodhi Faujdar Singh was in the service of the Darbar in the other two Sodhi estates of Anandpur and Makhowal political and administrative convenience was taken into account to settle the issue The Sodhis neither owed allegiance nor paid any tribute to Lahore and the Maharaja s claim was weak Yet the British Government considered it irksome to accord protection to them because they were religious leaders of the Sikhs—the Sodhis and the Bedis being the direct descendants of Guru Nanak The claim of Lahore supremacy over them was admitted for it was considered

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1 See generally Colebrooke to Wade 16 January 1829 (P) 115 29 21 July 1828 (P) 28 174 Also Murray to Colebrooke 2 June 1828 (P) 75 104

2. For correspondence see Wade to Metcalfe 29 November 1826 (P) 95 44 Murray to Metcalfe 18 October 25 November 1826 (P) 3 207 235 and Metcalfe to Murray 10 December 1826 (P) 26 265

3. Murray to Colebrooke 19 February 1828-(P) 7 17 Colebrooke to Murray 19 December 1828-(P) 28 236

4 *Ibid* also Beech to Starling (Enclosure) 17 June 1828 (P) 28 140

that they would be best managed by a government of their own religious belief.[1]

9 Visits of Murray and Wade

In 1826 Ranjit Singh fell ill. On his request, Doctor Murray of the 4th Native Infantry was sent to Lahore in November 1826. During his eight months' stay at Lahore, Murray found it difficult to persuade Ranjit Singh to accept his treatment, but his numerous despatches to the Ludhiana Agency provide interesting observations on the Sikh Court and the persons around the Maharaja.[2] He found the Maharaja full of praise for his French officers whom he purposely kept out of Murray's way.[3] He made numerous enquiries about the Barrackpur Mutiny, the composition of a British European regiment and the siege of Bharatpur.[4] During the latter part of Dr Murray's visit, Ranjit Singh showed signs of uneasiness at Lord Amherst's visit to the northern provinces and expressed a desire to meet the Governor-General. On Lord Amherst's arrival at Simla, Murray advised the Maharaja to send a goodwill mission to the British Government. A Sikh mission led by Diwan Moti Ram arrived at Simla in April 1827 and among the presents sent by Ranjit Singh was a handsome tent made of shawls for King George IV.[5]

The Governor-General believed that the Maharaja would be gratified to receive a return British mission. In May 1827, therefore, Claude Wade, the Political Assistant at Ludhiana was sent to Lahore bearing a complimentary letter and presents from the Governor-General. Wade's mission to Lahore is of great interest and his observations contain much that is of historical value.[6] Wade was accompanied by Captain Pearson and Doctor Gerard. On 29 May he was received by the Maharaja at Amritsar. Wade found Ranjit Singh diminutive in stature and in a very weak and emaciated condition.

During his stay at Amritsar Wade referred to the harmony and goodwill between the two states. He reviewed the Legion commanded by the Maharaja's French officers Allard and Ventura, and also

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1 Colebrooke to Murray, 19 December, 1828 (P) 28 236

2 For Dr Murray's despatches *vide* BPC(I) Range 125, Vols 15-21, particularly of 11 January, 1827, C16, 23 February-C20, 23, 2 March-C68, 16 March C13, 28, 30 March C32 36, 20 April C5, 7 and 1 June 1827 C17.

3 *Ibid* 23 February, 1827, C16, *ut supra*

4 *Ibid* C23 *op cit*

5 Wade to Stirling 10 April, 1827-BPC(I) 1 June 1827, C17

6 Wade to Metcalfe, 1 August 1827-BPC(I) 12 October, 1827, C3

inspected the renowned *Ghorcharas* (match-lock horsemen). The Maharaja reviewed a parade of a troop of cavalry and the company of infantry forming the escort of the mission. Wade visited the Golden Temple where the priests prayed for peace and unanimity between the *Khalsaji* and the British Government. On 11 June, the mission inspected the *Koh-i-Nūr* diamond.[1]

Wade was impressed by the brilliancy and splendour of the Court. The Maharaja, he reported, usually wore a plain dress. In conversation his manner was rugged, marked by a puerile curiosity but his observations were intelligent.[2] Wade's discussions with the Maharaja ranged from the Kashmir trade to the best method of shooting from horseback. The Maharaja drew Wade's attention to the prefidious character of the Afghans and the recent *jehad* of Syed Ahmad against the Sikhs. He appeared to be interested in British relations with Persia and Russia. The old man's reminiscences of Holkar's and Metcalfe's visits to the Punjab were extremely interesting. His French officers, Ranjit Singh told Wade, claimed to be able to subdue the whole of Afghanistan with the help of 10 regiments. The asylum afforded to the exiled Afghan monarch, Shah Shuja at Ludhiana, he observed, was actuated by some ulterior motive rather than British commiseration in the Shah's misfortune. An opinion prevailed at the Darbar that the mission had come to effect by negotiation with the Maharaja, the restoration of Shah Shuja to his throne in Afghanistan.[3]

Wade also observed minutely the fortifications of Amritsar aad the citadel of Govindgarh, which appeared to he quite formidahle. The town of Amritsar, he found a besieged city—nn army of 25,000 men including the Mabaraja's corps of artillery and infantry encamped around its walls. "It was a scene of activity more like a preparation of war," he reported, "than a military spectacle as it was designed to amuse and divert the mission during its continuance at the Court."[4]

The mission left Amritsar on 15 June and arrived hack at Ludhiana on the 19th.

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1 *Ibid* paras 33, 47, 49 and 57.
2 *Ibid* para 10
3. *Ibid* paras 37, 38, 41, 42, 45, 48 59, 65 and 66
4 *Ibid* para 32

Chapter VIII

THE NAVIGATION OF THE INDUS, 1830—1836

1 A counterfeit mission

In the year 1830, a strange gift from the King of England arrived at Bombay for Maharaja Ranjit Singh It consisted of a team of cart-horses, four mares and one stallion Henry Prinsep, Secretary to the Government of India, observed good-humouredly that the gift had been sent under the belief that Ranjit Singh would be pleased to have mares of a large size to cross with the breeds of the Punjab Sir John Malcolm, the Governor of Bombay, added to the team a carriage and forwarded them to Henry Pottinger, the British Resident at Cutch with the instructions that Alexander Burnes should proceed up the Indus to Lahore with the present for Ranjit Singh [1] This was the ostensible reason of the journey The real object of Burnes' mission was to survey the Indus and to obtain information regarding its navigability. This meant a journey through the territories of the Sindhian Amirs, who were averse to any foreign interference in their country

2 Relations with Sind

British relations with Sind went back to the year 1800, when Nathan Crowe, a Bombay civil servant had concluded a commercial agreement of dubious value with the Talpurian Amirs, but two years later, the Amirs expelled the British commercial resident from Sind and the connection came to an abrupt end [2] In 1808 Captain David Seton was deputed to restore the connection His treaty with the Government of Sind was quite inconsistent with British interests,[3] because it provided for an offensive and defensive alliance with Amir Ghulam Ali Talpur The Government of India hastily annuled it Smith was next sent by Lord Minto to remedy Seton's error and procure the abrogation of the unratified treaty [4] His negotiations with the three Amirs of Hyderabad, Mirpur and Khairpur ended in a vague sort of semi commercial and semi political agreement with Sind in August 1809 By it the Talpurians agreed not to allow "the establishment of the tribe of the French in Sinde" [5]

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1. Government of Bombay to Prinsep 30 December 1830 BSPC(I) 21 January, 1831
2. Governor-General to Secret Committee 15 December 1808 BISL(I)
3. *Ibid* paras 82-88
4. *Ibid* paras 89 90
5. *Correspondence relative to Sind* (PP) XXXIV, 1843 No 1

For a decade no one thought of the Anglo Sindhian treaty, but in 1819 the British had occupied Cutch and Ranjit Singh had, a year earlier annexed Multan Also in 1821 the Sikhs had wrested the Derajat from the Bahawalpur Daudpotas In 1820 the Bombay Government noticed that the British and Sikh frontiers had become contiguous to Sind A revision of the treaty of 1809 was therefore obtained from the Sindhians in November 1820, mainly to put an end to the frontier depredations of the Khosas and other Baluch tribes, who made occasional inroads into British territory from Sind [1] One of its articles provided that the Amirs would not permit any European to settle in their dominions [2]

3 Sikh designs

In the early twenties, Sind did not appear of much commercial or political advantage to the British yet the Talpurians viewed with unconcealed suspicion the proximity of a powerful neighbour in Cutch They were equally apprehensive of the designs of the Sikh Government, whose ambitious ruler was gradually extending his dominions towards Multan and Bahawalpur Ranjit Singh's intentions towards Shikarpur and Sind were transparent both to the Sindhians and the British Various Sindhian agents proceeded to Lahore, but failed to get any adjustment of border disputes [3] For a decade the Ludhiana Political Assistant had watched with apparent unconcern Ranjit Singh's designs on Sind Wade s numerous reports notice the Sikh ruler's aggression on Bahawalpur [4] The Lahore news writers informed the Ludhiana Agency that the Maharaja intended invading Sind,[5] and that he was holding frequent discussions with his French military advisers for its ultimate conquest [6]

India from the Mediterranean particularly from the Persiao Gulf to the mouth of the Indus, the Home Government had drawn Marquess of Wellesley s attention to that river[1] Though the Indus was considered a weak barrier in 1798 and the line of the Jamoa preferable for defence of the North West frontier,[2] yet in 1808 Arthur Wellesley had devised a doubtful plao for defending India against a Franco Russian invasion on that river[3] The Indus was considered navigable for vessels of considerable size The friendship of the chiefs bordering on it was, therefore important for commercial and political reasoos[4]

4 Navigation of the Indus

The feasibility of the navigation of the Indus as a regular channel of commercial intercourse between India and Central Asia was also hinted at by William Moorcroft, who had travelled in 1819-20 to the Punjab and Kashmir and the countries beyond the Indus, but his suggestioo was dismissed by Lord Amherst's Government as an unprofitable speculatioo Lord William Bentinck, on the other hand found the idea of practical advantage and his suggestion with regard to it aroused the interest of the Home Government The latter s directive to the Governmeot of Iodia was equally imaginative It was foodly hoped that if the Indus could be opened to navigation, it might oust Russian commercial ioflueoce not ooly from Bokhara but also from the countries lying betweeo Iodia and the Caspian sea Io working out the scheme the Goveroment of India discovered that it possessed no positive information as to the exact nature of the proper course of the river the state of the delta or the navigating facilities offered by it Burnes was, therefore sent to survey the river and Trevelyan a Deputy Secretary to Goveroment, detailed to collect information respecting the trade of the Punjab and the territories west of the Indus[6]

5 Counterpoise to Sikh advance

The Indus Navigation Scheme in spite of its apparent commercial

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1 Dundas to Wellesley 6 June 1798 *Wellesley Papers* (BM) 37274 *fol* 30 40 Dundas to Grenville 13 June 1798 *op cit fol* 45 *ff*

2 Arthur Wellesley to Dundas No 10 (Owen) p 474

3 *Ib d* 29 April 1808 *op cit* p 477

4 Dundas to Wellesley (WP) BM *op cit fol* 203b 205a

5 Government to Pottinger (Resident in Cutch) 22 October 1831 PSPC(1) 25 November 1831 C27 para 1

6 Letters from Secretary to Governor General (Enclosures 1 2) Secret Letter 23 August 1831 BISL(1) Vol 21 *fol* 283 *sq*

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Ranjit Singh's gradual advance towards the borders of Sind coincided with a possible Russo Persian threat It is doubtful whether the Indus had ever been seriously considered to be a line of defence against the advance of a foreign army from the direction of Baluchistan and Sind Towards the close of the eighteenth century, for instance, when the French were considered capable of transferring an army to

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1 *Ibid* No 2 Art 4
2 *Ibid* Art 3
3 Wade to Hawkins (Offg Resident Delhi) 15 March, 1830-(P) 98 37
4 Wade to Elliot (Resident Delhi) 24 August 1823 (P) 94 15
5 *Ibid* 7 Septemb r, 1823-(P) 94 17
6 Wade to Colebrooke (Resident Delhi) 11 August, 1828-(P) 96 113

India from the Mediterranean, particularly from the Persian Gulf to the mouth of the Indus, the Home Government had drawn Marquess of Wellesley's attention to that river[1] Though the Indus was considered a weak barrier in 1798 and the line of the Jumna preferable for defence of the North-West frontier,[2] yet in 1808 Arthur Wellesley had devised a doubtful plan for defending India against a Franco Russian invasion on that river[3] The Indus was considered navigable for vessels of considerable size The friendship of the chiefs bordering on it was, therefore, important for commercial and political reasons[4]

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character, had political and military objectives Ranjit Singh's plans for an advance upon Sind were nearing completion He informed the Amirs that as successor to the Durrani dominions in India, he had a right to the tribute which they had customarily paid to the Afghans[1] Early in 1831, the Sikh forces advanced towards Sabzalkot, a few miles from the Sind frontier, and occupied the Baluch districts of Harrand and Dajil[2] The Lahore General Ventura marched southwards with 10,000 troops, and at Dera Ghazi Khan where his troops were stationed, a fort was being constructed for future operations against Bahawalpur and Sind[3] Shikarpur was not more than 30 miles distant from Ventura's Sikh army Compared to a remote Russo-Persian threat to the Indian frontiers, Ranjit Singh's advance towards Sind seemed imminent It was, therefore, essential to forestall the one if any effective measures were to be taken against the other

The Indus Navigation Scheme had, therefore, a two-fold objective In informing the Home Government, Lord William Bentinck admitted that the measure was aimed at the establishment of British influence in Sind and the exclusion of all other powers It was also desirable to consider the formation of political connections with the states and chiefs of the Indus which would form a barrier against any threat from the direction of Khorasan[4]

6 Trevelyan's Report

Trevelyan's report on the Navigation of the Indus, notwithstanding its fantastic conclusions regarding commerce, was highly suggestive The opening of the navigation of the Indus, he observed, would be beneficial to the Sikhs, the Afghans, and the Bokharians as well as to the British English goods, when brought into competition with the Russian would, in a few years, drive out Russian goods from the markets of Afghanistan and Central Asia The enterprise, he argued, would give an impetus to manufacturers at home, increase the revenues of the Company and create an identity of interests between the Afghans, the Turkomans and the British, which might possibly at some future date be turned to important political advantage His report on the Navigation of the Indus was regarded by Lord Bentinck as worthy of attentive consideration[5]

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1 Wade to Government 18 May 1831 (P) 137 8
2 *Ibid*
3 Governor General to Secret Committee, 19 November, 1831 *op cit*, para 22
4 *Ibid* paras 25 26
5 Governor General to Secret Committee 23 August 1831-BISL(I)

7 Metcalfe s strictures

On receiving the correspondenee from Bombay relating to Burnes' spurious mission to Lahore, Sir Charles Metcalfe, President of the Council, wrote an indignant minute, dated 25 Oetober, 1830, which forms an enclosure to the Governor-General's letter to the Secret Committee of 21 Novemher.[1] In this extraordinary document, he considered the scheme of surveying the Indus under a fictitious pretence of sending a gift to Ranjit Singh as highly ohjectionahle-unwarrantable in principle and inexpedient in policy [2] He observed that there was no urgency for the undertaking, that means adopted for it were illegitimate, and that such clandestine proceedings were ungenerous and unfair to the rulers of Sind [3]

Reviewing in general, the behaviour of the Government of India towards native states, Metealfe passed severe strictures on Bentinek's policy, whieh was the outcome of fear from the supposed designs of Russia He castigated the Home Government for eoneurring with the poliey of the Government of India, whieh to prevent an imaginary threat, aimed nt the eoercion of intermediate states Sueh eonduet towards the native states, in his opinion, was the greatest blot on British Government's Indian policy Metealfe described the fictitious eharacter of Burnes' mission as a trick unworthy of British Government [4]

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1 BISL(I) Vol 21, *fol* 113 129

2 *Ibid fol* 113

3 *Ibid fol* 116 117

4 In tnis minute curiously, Metcalfe, after nearly two decades signifcantly refers to his own mission to Lahore in 1808-9 —

Twenty years ago he observes the writer of this minute was emplo, ed to negotiate an alliance against a French invasion with a native state beyond our North Western frontier A French invasion was our hughear as a Russian one is now a French army was reported to have reached Isfahan But the Spanish insurrection hroke out Sir Arthur Wellesley beat the French at Rolica and Vimiero, and we thought no more of the French invasion

'The only thing certain is that we ought not wantonly to offend Intermediate states hy acts calculated to rouse hostile feelings against us, hut rather to cultivate friendly dispostions

'We could not do better than hy avoiding forced intimacy, for either our character is so had or weaker states are naturally so jealous of the stronger, or our habits ate so distasteful thar no native state either desires connection with us un'ess it needs our prote tion excepting under circumstances rendering our countenance or aid essential We cannot ohlige our neighbours more than hy desisting from seeking intercourse with them'

Metcalfe s forceful observations on British policy towards Sind in particular and native states in general were shelved Burnes was allowed to proceed on his clandestine mission and Bentinck s scheme for the opening of tbe Indus was put into operation

8 Refusal of passage

Burnes started on his spurious mission early in 1831 He made two unsuccessful attempts to proceed up the Indus with his precious cargo [1] but tbe Amirs doubted bis *bona fides* and showed strong repugnance to bis voyage Consequently Henry Pottinger the Resident in Cutch had to enter into protracted correspondence with them to allay their fears and convince them tbat if the cargo was sent by road it would be damaged [2] The Amirs stubbornly refused to yield and based their objections on a ridiculous interpretation of the treaty of 1820 whicb forbade any European to settle in Sind [3] The Political Assistant at Ludhiana was therefore instructed to bring their intransigence to the notice of the Lahore Government Ranjit Singh too was suspicious of these proceedings but he appeared to be surprised at the obstructive tactics of the Sindbians and showed disappointment at the non arrival of the presents by tbe route he had been led to expect them [4] The Mabaraja remonstrated witb tbe Sindhian *vakils* at h s court and ordered his Derajat commander to make a military demonstration on the Sind frontier Tbe measure induced the Amirs to display a more favourable disposition to Burnes and his cargo Pottinger now hoped that Burnes' passage up tbe Indus would be facilitated [5]

9 Burnes *Memoir*

On 10 March Burnes sailed from Mandavie and proceeded up the Indus passing Khairpur without any untoward incident He observed minutely tbe course of the river its commercial and political potentialities At Panjnad the confluence of the Punjab rivers with the Indus be was met by a party of Labore officials [6] The Daudpota chief of Babawalpur showed him marked attention and civility [7] As he

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee 6 May 1831 BISL(I) Vol 21 *fol* 253 *ff*

2 *Ib d* (Enclosures 25 26 to the Secret Letter)

3 Wade to Martin 10 11 12 March 1831 (P) 98 154 155 and 157

4 Governor General to Secret Committee *ut supra* para 4

5 Pott nger to Government 25 March 1831 (Enclosure No 29) BISL(I) 6 May 1831

6 Prinsep to Wade 27 May 1831 (P) 115 83

7 Burnes to Mart n 6 June 1831 (P) 115 ..8

progressed up the country and entered the tortuous Ravi near the Sikh capital, the Government ordered Wade the Ludhiana Political Assistant to join Burnes at the presentation ceremony at Lahore Ranjit Singh felt greatly honoured and expressed satisfaction for the distinction conferred upon him [1]

Burnes voyage up the Indus had been watched with considerable interest by the Government of India His report—*A Geographical and Military Memoir on the Indus and its tributary rivers from the sea to Lahore*," was considered by Lord William Bentinck as an interesting, informative and important document [3] His survey indicated that the river Indus was suitable for commerce It was navigable, had a uniform depth and not too powerful a current From the ocean to its junction with the united streams of the Punjab, it ran exclusively within the territories of Hyderabad and Khairpur Rustam Ali, the chief of Khairpur was anxious to have an alliance with the British and Burnes concluded, that in return he would assent to any proposed navigation of that part of the river flowing within his territory Murad Ali, the Amir of Hyderabad, on the other hand, was a self-willed and ignorant bigot, who had always considered the exclusion of foreigners from his dominion as his best security Moreover, he contemplated the marriage of his second son with a Persian princess, and this, reported Burnes, pointed to a Russian intrigue for a future political alliance with an Indian state through Persia [4]

10 The Participants

Burnes' report made a favourable impression on the Governor General, who soon decided that an effort might be made to procure the consent of the parties concerned for the opening of the navigation of the river Indus to the commerce of India and Europe [5] It was hoped that the Sindhian Amirs could be persuaded to agree to the navigation of the river within their territories But the scheme could not work efficiently without the active participation of the Lahore Government, for, the concurrence of the Amirs would render the Indus navigable

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1 Wade to Prinsep 21 July 1831 (P) 137 21

2 Enclosure No 3 to Secret Department No 1560 of 3 August 1831 BISL(I) of the same date

3 Government to Pottinger 22 October 1831 BSPC(I) 25 November 1831 C27 para 5

4 Burnes *Memoir op cit*

5 Government to Pottinger, 22 October 1831 BSPC(I) 25 November 1831 C27, para 1

only for 150 miles within Sind and would leave out the Punjab rivers to the extent of about 1,000 miles. The Indus itself, from its junction with the Punjab rivers northwards of Panjnad, lay within the territories of Lahore and its tributary Bahawalpur. The opening of the navigation of the Punjab rivers, with the exception of the Sutlej, whose banks were jointly owned by the British, the Sikhs and the Daudpotas, could not justly be demanded as a matter of right.[1] The Maharaja's participation in the scheme was, therefore, considered essential. Consequently, Bentinck thought it was first essential to enter into an agreement with the Lahore Government, and then, in the case of opposition from the Amirs, their resistance could easily be overborne by the joint remonstrations of both states.[2]

But in actual practice, the process was reversed. While Pottinger proceeded to treat with the Amirs, Wade kept the Maharaja in complete ignorance of the object of Pottinger's visit to Hyderabad. The advantages offered by the river Indus, Bentinck informed the Secret Committee, were both political and military. If an occasion should ever arise for providing for the defence of India against an invasion from the West, facilities offered by the stream for the transport of goods and navigation could be made use of.[3] From a purely political point of view, it was better to safeguard first the Indian frontier in that direction by connecting Sind with British India, and then, to confront Ranjit Singh with an accomplished fact. This would stem the tide of his ambitions towards that country.

(i) The Ropar Meeting

received from Ludhiana that the Lahore commander Ventura had occupied all the territories of Bahawalpur west of the Indus, as well as the tract between that river and the Sutlej Nothing now remained between the Lahore army and the territories of Khairpur and Sind [1]

Three days earlier (22 October), Bentinck had dispatched instructions to Pottinger to proceed to Sind [2] He did not think the time was ripe for any communication to be made to Ranjit Singh regarding Sind On the other hand, Ranjit Singh betrayed his distrust at Rupar when he desired a written assurance from the Governor-General for the continuation of 'eternal relations of friendship' "Although fully aware of this design," commented Lord Bentinck, "I did not scruple to give the desired document, omitting however, the declaration that our friends and enemies were to be one and the same, on the ground, that the relations established between the two Governments would scarcely warrant such a pledge The anxiety shown by His Highness for the introduction of this assurance and the reason assigned for it are amongst the characteristic circumstances which attended the interview [3]

12 Pottinger in Sind

At Hyderabad, Pottinger found that Amir Murad Ali exhibited open hostility towards the British mission With considerable tact, he tried to convince him of the friendly intentions of the British He pointed out to him the folly of his denying to the British and other neighbouring states freedom of the navigation of the Indus He also stressed the Amir's isolated position and his absolute helplessness against the designs of Ranjit Singh Pottinger further told the Amir that Khairpur, Bahawalpur and the Lahore Government had all virtually agreed to join the British in opening to navigation those parts of the Indus running through their dominions After protracted evasions and refusals by the Amirs and after persuations and threats by Pottinger, the latter was able to conclude separate treaties with Khairpur and Hyderabad [4] Both the Amirs agreed to allow merchants and traders

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1 Wade to Government 19 October 1831 (P) 137 34 also Secret Letter *ut supra* para 43

2 Government to Pottinger 22 October 1831 BSPC(I) 25 November 1831 C27

3 *Ibid* para 43

4 Pottinger's report on his mission and other measures adopted by the Government of India for the opening of the Indus and the Sutlej are given at length in the Governor General's Secret Letter of 2 July 1832-BISL(I) Vol 22 *fol* 132-227 paras 1 171 His transactions in Sind unless otherwise referred to, are based on the above document

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11 The Rupar Meeting

With these mental reservations, Lord William Bentinck met Ranjit Singh at Rupar late in October 1831 The apparent affability of the meeting was deceptive While Bentinck wanted to forestall the Sikh ruler in his designs on Sind, the latter had in his mind a desire to obtain British help or at least an assurance of non interference with his projects in the same direction The Maharaja exhibited such anxiety with regard to Sind referring explicitly to its wealth and weakness, that Bentinck shrewdly guessed that he had come to Rupar to ascertain the views of the British Government before he started his operations in Sind[4] While the Governor-General was at Rupar, intelligence was

1 *Ibid* para 8

2 Governor General to Secret Committee 19 November 1831 BISL(I) Vol 21 para 23

3 *Ibid* para 24

4 *Ibid* para 42

received from Ludbiana that the Labore commander Ventura had occupied all the territories of Bahawalpur west of the Indus, as well as the tract between that river and the Sutlej. Nothing now remained between the Lahore army and the territories of Khairpur and Sind.[1]

Three days earlier (22 October), Bentinck had dispatched instructions to Pottinger to proceed to Sind.[2] He did not think the time was ripe for any communication to be made to Ranjit Singh regarding Sind. On the other hand, Ranjit Singh betrayed his distrust at Rupar when he desired a written assurance from the Governor-General for the continuation of 'eternal relations of friendsbip.' "Although fully nware of this design," eommented Lord Bentinck, "I did not scruple to give the desired document, omitting, however, the declaration that our friends and enemies were to be one and the same, on the ground, that the relations established between the two Governments would searcely warrant such a pledge. The anxiety shown by His Highness for the introduction of tbis assurance and the reason assigned for it, are amongst the eharacteristic eircumstances which attended the interview."[3]

12. Pottinger in Sind

At Hyderabad, Pottinger found that Amir Murad Ali exhibited open hostility towards the British mission. With considerable tact, he tried to convince him of the friendly intentions of the British. He pointed out to him tbe folly of his denying to the British and otber neighbouring states freedom of the navigation of the Indus. He also stressed the Amir's isolated position and his absolute helplessness against the designs of Ranjit Singh. Pottinger further told the Amir that Khairpur, Bahawalpur and the Lahore Government had all virtually agreed to join the British in opening to navigation those parts of the Indus running tbrough their dominions. After protracted evasions and refusals by the Amirs and after persuations and threats by Pottinger, the latter was able to conelude separate treaties with Khairpur and Hyderabad.[4] Both the Amirs agreed to allow merchants and traders

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1. Wade to Government, 19 October, 1831-(F) 137 34 . also Secret Letter, *ut. supra*, para 43

2 Government to Pottinger, 22 October, 1831-BSPC(I) 25 November, 1831, C27.

3. *Ibid* para 43.

4. Pottinger's report on his mission and other measures adopted by the Government of India for the opening of the Indus and the Sutlej are given at length in the Governor-General's Secret Letter of 2 July, 1832-BISL(I), Vol. 22, *fol.* 132-227, paras 1-171. His transactions in Sind, unless otherwise referred to, are based on the above document.

hy making the Indus and the Sutlej a channel of commerce, the revenues of the Lahore Government could be augmented [1]

During the negotiations, Ranjit Singh expressed himself freely. He said that while he had no objection to participating in the scheme, he should he assured that it would not he extended to the other rivers of the Punjah, and that the British Government had no intention of altering or interfering with the treaty of 1809 [2] Obviously he saw through British diplomacy and wanted an unequivocal assurance of non-interference from the British Government in his designs on Sind Meanwhile Pottinger's success with the Sindhian Amirs induced the Government of India to depute Wade again in Septemher 1832 to Lahore and Bahawalpur to conclude similar treaties for the opening of the Indus and the Sutlej He was also directed to journey to Mithankot and ohtain geographical and statistical data of the country through which he would pass [3] The Maharaja was at Pind Dadan Khan, and when Wade arrived at that place on 27 Octoher, along with a technical assistant named Hodges, who was to survey the country, he found the former sceptical of the whole scheme The Political Assistant, therefore, had to eonvince him of the advantages he would receive hy opening the navigation of the two rivers [4]

14 Tariff Report

In the meantime, Trevelyan had suhmitted a Tariff Report which Macnaghten forwarded to Wade for communication to Ranjit Singh and the Nawah of Bahawalpur The report envisaged profit to traders rather than to the participating states The custom returns (12½% on cloth and metals and 5% on everything else) were to he shared hy Lahore, Bahawalpur *and Sind in equitable proportions* *The British Government* was to supervise commerce at Harike, hut its share was kept unspecified A treaty with Lahorc signed on 26 December, 1832, covered the conditions by wbich the Indus Sutlej navigation was to be regulated Tariff duties as differentiated from local transit charges were to he collected hy nominated officials and the manner laid down in which

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1 Governor General to Ranjit Singh BSPC(I) 13 January, 1832 C5

2 Wade to Prinsep (Enclosure) 3 February, 1832 also Secret Letter, *ut supra* para 188

3 Macnaghten to Wade 19 September, 1832-BSPC(I) 1 October 1832 C19

4 Wade to Macnaghten, 27 October, 1832-(P) 138 60

5 Macnaghten to Wade 15 November, 1832, (Enclosure) Trevelyan's Report BSPC(I) 24 December 1832, C5

of Iodia passage "by the river and roads of Sinde," facilities for the transportatioo of goods aod merchandise and the levy of just and reasonable duties The treaty witb Hyderabad, however, made stipulations against the employment of armed vessels or boats on the Indus or the importation of military stores either by the river or hy road Restrictions were also placed on the future settlement of English merchaots in Sind and oo the issue of passports to traders entering the Hyderabad territories[1] No treaty was necessary with the Amir of Mirpur as he was considered politically iosignificant and his territory did not lie on tbe Indus

No intimation of the objects of Pottinger's mission bad so far been given to Kanjit Singh, whose anxious enquiries from Wade had failed to elicit any information[2] Late in December, when Pottinger's reports indicated that his mission was likely to succeed in Sind, Wade proceeded to Lahore to aooounce to the Maharaja, the deputation of Pottinger to Sind and to explain to him the advantages which his government would obtain from the scbeme He was particularly directed to exert himself in removing from the mind of the Sikb ruler, any suspicioo he might have that by means of a commercial mission, the British Government was desirous of extending its political influence in Siod[3]

13 Sikh suspicions

But Ranjit Singh appeared to be suspicious, and when Wade reached Phillour on 13 January, he sensed this distrust His reception was cold, for, the person appointed to conduct him to the Court was of an inferior rank[4] Wade was, however, confident that he would overcome the Maharaja's sensitiveness, which he attributed to a distrust of the objects of his journey and to the British reticence, particularly with regard to his well-known designs on Shikarpur[5] On arrival at the Court on 25 January, he found the Maharaja in a sullen and taciturn mood, encamped at Mecani, on the left bank of the Ravi[6] The Governor-General's letter to the Maharaja delivered by Wade, conveyed to him the objects of the navigation scheme and the manner in which

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1 *Vide* Treaty with Khairpur (4 April 1832) (PP) XXXIV, 1843 No C3 with Hydrabad (20 April 1832) *op cit* No 4

2 Wade to Prinsep, 7 January 1832

3 Prinsep to Wade 19 December 1831 (P) 115-102 Governor General to Secret Committee 2 July, 1832 *ut supra* para 175

4 Governor General to Secret Committee *ut supra*, para 177

5 Wade to Prinsep 13 January 1832-(P) 138 2

6 Governor General to Secret Committee, *ut. supra* para 179

by making the Indus and the Sutlej a channel of commerce, the revenues of the Lahore Government could be augmented [1]

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1 Governor General to Ranjit Singh BSPC(I) 13 January 1832 C5

2 Wade to Prinsep (Enclosure) 3 February 1832 also Secret Letter *ut supra* para 183

3 Macnaghten to Wade 19 September 1832-BSPC(I) 1 October 1832 C19

4 Wade to Macnaghten 27 October 1832-(P) 138 60

5 Macnaghten to Wade 15 November 1832 (Enclosure) Trevelyan s Report BSPC(I) 24 December 1832 C5

trade by that route was to be protected A similar treaty was concluded with Bahawalpur, notwithstanding the Sindhian agent's efforts to prevent the Nawab doing so[1] From Bahawalpur Wade proceeded to Mithankot to complete the survey of the Indus He returned to Ludhiana on 12 April, 1833

15 Scheme's failure

In the piloting of the Scheme, however, practical difficulties arose Bombay and Cutch traders were informed that the Indus and the Sutlej had been opened to commerce and navigation Ludhiana and Amritsar merchants were persuaded to join duty free cargo from Harike to Mithankote,[2] but when the boats reached Shikarpur, city merchants were obliged to buy the goods at a fixed price The measure, without encouraging the Punjab traders, had the evil effect of disgusting the local merchants[3]

It is unnecessary to examine the project in detail Its progress was slow Commercially it was unprofitable to the traders, and politically it foreboded evil to the states The mercantile community of Bombay, Cutch, Multan, Bahawalpur and Sind did not receive any incentive to promote it and the participating states found the revenues from it far below their expectations Yet Auckland's Government carried on the farce of commerce till British political aims became transparently clear to everybody It desired that annual fairs should be held at Mithankot, Thatta or Shikarpur and that merchants from Balakh, Bokhara, Turkistan and Kabul should bring their wares and exchange them for the produce of India and Europe The examination of the whole of the coast and harbours of Cutch and Sind, from Mandavie to Karachi was ordered[4] Steam vessels were to be introduced on the river, jungles cut in Sind for a ware housing system, buoys laid down in the river and wooden landmarks erected on the shore[5] Mackeson, the British agent at Mithankot produced his journal recording the low and high levels of the rivers and also meteorological tables Hodges prepared a book of field surveys and tables showing the breadth, depth and rapidity of the current not only of the Indus and the Sutlej

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1 For treaties *vide* Appendices Nos 6 7

2 Wade to Macnaghten 25 February 1833 (P) 139 10

3 Pottinger to Government 10 December 1836 (PP) XXXIV 1843 No 6 para 49

4 Governor General's Memorandum on Commercial Mission (PP) *op cit* Enclosure No 1 to 6

5 Pottinger to Government 10 December, 1836 *ut supra*

hut also of the other Punjab rivers[1] While Mackeson was discussing with the merchants of Mithankot what would be a convenient point on the Indus for the establishment of an entrepot and annul fair on the model of Leipzig and Nijni Novgorod, Burnes proceeded to Kabul to convince the Afghan traders of the ostensible benefits of the scheme if extended further north.

Though the British transactions in Sind had now become openly political, the thin edge of commerce had not yet worn off The *ad valorem* duty proved to be unworkable To obviate the delays and disputes caused by it Trevelyan drew up another plan substituting in its place a fixed toll[3] The toll was not to be variable but of a uniformly calculated rate fixed on the average capacity of the boats[4] It was fixed at Rs 570 per boat from Rupar to the sea, of which the Amirs were to get Rs 240 and the remainder was to be shared by Lahore Bahawalpur and the feudatory chiefs[5] Supplementary treaties embodying these terms, were concluded with Lahore and Bahawalpur, with the proviso, that a British officer should reside at Mithankot and a native British agent at Harike—both under the Ludhiana Agency, to supervise the collection of the tolls due to different states and the adjustment of disputes in relation to it[6] Mackeson was nominated as British Agent for the Navigation of the Indus and the Sutlej Pottinger had to threaten the Amirs with the use of force before the Hyderabad ruler agreed to the modified terms which included the stationing of a British agent at the capital[7]

15 British designs

The Indus Navigation Scheme was doomed to failure from the very beginning As a practical commercial proposition, both the merchants and the states found it unprofitable As a naive political curiosity, it justified its end in the attainment of British objectives in Sind by apparently innocent methods But the farce of the revival of

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1 Wade to Macnaghten 1 December 1836 (Enclosures 1 5) (P) 142 98

2 *Ib d* 26 S ptember 1836 (P) 142 18

3 Pottinger to Government BSPC(I) 0 October 1833 C12 13

4 Governor General to Secret Committee 5 March 183 BISL(I) para 5

5 Wade to Macnaghten 9 June 1834 BSPC(I) 16 July 1834 C14 Governor General to Secret Committee, 5 March 1835 *ut supra*

6 For Wade s correspondence on the subject *vid* ISP(I) 4 July 1834 Nos 1 3 24 September No 4 also BPC(I) 2 December 1834 C64 79 and 80 For Indus and Sutlej Toll Agreements *vide* Append ces Nos 9 10

7 Government to Pottinger 23 January 1835 Governor General to Secret Committee *ut supra* para 43

an ancient trade route for maritime intercourse between upper India, Central Asia and Europe could not be kept up indefinitely Soon all pretence to it was given up

The participating states were forced to join it under constant political pressure Ranjit Singh was lured into it not because of its prospective material benefits, but with a fond belief that co operation in a commercial enterprise would facilitate his main objective in Sind—the occupation of Shikarpur Bahawalpur, wedged precariously between Lahore and the Sind frontier, joined it because of the fear of Ranjit Singh s aggression Only the Amirs, whose political existence was vitally at stake, resisted to the last The headstrong Hyderabad ruler saw through the game of British commercial emissaries—Burnes, Pottinger, Wade and Mackeson He stubbornly refused to ratify the treaties[1] When threatened by Pottinger, on his refusal to sanction the stationing of a British Agent at Hyderabad, he displayed his disgust "Let the British Government resort to force if it likes I have agreed to nothing We are soldiers and we shall see the results"[2]

But, notwithstanding his bluster, the Amir ultimately signed the Anglo Hyderabad Commercial treaty of 1834 It provided that a British agent was to be stationed at the port on the mouth of the river Indus "to help realise the toll due to Sinde" The British Government, on its part, promised non interference in the affairs of the Sind Government This nearly completed the arrangements for the scheme

Meanwhile, the Government of India became more alarmed at Russian intrigues in northern Persia and Indian statemsmen began discussing the means of averting the supposed crisis As the threat increased, all zeal in the promotion of commerce in Sind and elsewhere began to abate British political objectives in Sind and Afghanistan necessitated a different policy The advance of Sikh power in Sind was to be prevented and supplanted by British influence From 1836 onwards, British diplomacy towards Hyderabad and Lahore took a definite turn The navigation venture had served as a prelude to events of greater political significance

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee *ut supra* paras 8 31

2 Macnaghten to Wade 17 November, 1834 (P) 105 78

Chapter IX

DIPLOMATIC TUSSLE OVER SIND, 1836—1838

1 Auckland's Policy

Bentinck's commercial experiments in the Punjab and Sind had kept pace with the steady growth of a new political phenomenon—the supposed Russo Persian threat to India's north-western frontiers Compared to it Ranjit Singh's designs on Sind appeared merely vexatious and annoying Sir Charles Metcalfe, who acted for a while as Governor General in 1835, could hardly reconcile himself to pursuing a policy, which he considered fundamentally unprincipled In June 1836, therefore, when Auckland took charge of his office, the hectic commercial zeal of the Indian Government had somewhat cooled down Though the arrangements made with the Sikhs and the Sindhians with regard to the navigation of the Indus had yet to be finalised, it was apparent that British relations with Sind were uncanny in their commercial garb, with Lahore they were of practical disadvantage Auckland soon realised that British interests required not only the prevention of the extension of Sikh power along the whole course of the Indus,[1] but also a closer political union with Sind, if it could be effected by peaceful means[2] Sind was of great political importance It commanded the mouth of the Indus and also held a position of vantage both with reference to the Punjab and Afghanistan[3] It appeared to Auckland that if there was less of material utilitarianism and a pinch of politics, the British Government could establish its influence on a solid basis in Sind[4]

Adequate measures towards that end were soon taken in hand Burnes proceeded again on a "commercial mission" to Hyderabad Mithankot, Kandahar and Kabul Pottinger, the Governor-General's Agent for Sind, followed him to Hyderabad to take up negotiations of a political character with the Amirs[5] Wade's efforts were to be directed towards preventing the Maharaja from pursuing an aggressive

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1 Macnaghten to Wade 25 September 1836-(PP) XXXIV 1843 No 2 para 2

2 Government to Pottinger 26 September 1836 (PP) *op cit* No 3

3 Governor General to Secret Committee 26 November, 1836 BISL(I), Vol 23

4 *Ibid*

5 *Ibid* para 2

policy towards the Amirs The Sikh Talpurian dispute offered the best opportunity to the Indian Government to gain its political objectives

2 Sikh Sindhian Relations

Politically, Sind was as important to the Lahore Government as Peshawar and Kashmir in the north, and Shikarpur was, unquestionably the key to Sind [1] Once a flourishing centre of trade between Upper Sind and Khorasan, it was still a rich commercial town and a political curiosity owned jointly by the three Talpurian states of Hyderabad, Mirpur and Khairpur The imbecile Khairpur chief, on whom its administration virtually devolved could neither defend it from the Sikhs nor safeguard its commercial prosperity from the frequent depredations of the Mazaris, a tribe of savage free booters nominally dependent upon the Amirs It was a rich prize for Ranjit Singh, who considered its possession essential if he was to dominate Sind and wipe out the petty Talpurian states Since 1820, Sind and Shikarpur had become the fixed objective of Sikh expansion southwards In the same year, Ranjit Singh had witnessed the expulsion of Shah Shuja from the town by Muhammad Azim Khan, the Kabul Vazier A few years later, the Sikh Government advanced claims to it denouncing the Amirs as usurpers In 1823, Ranjit Singh had demanded tribute from the Talpurian Amirs,[2] in 1824, he had effected the complete subjection of the Bahawalpur Daudpotas, and had extended his sway as far down the Indus as Tatta Bhakar [3] In 1825, he had made an abortive attempt to occupy it by force [4] During the late twenties, Sindhian agents con stantly kept arriving at Lahore to appease the Maharaja,[5] who was getting impatient to subjugate the whole of Sind [6]

And if in the late twenties, Amherst's Government adopted an attitude of calculated supineness, that of Bentinck's considered the Sikh designs on Sind as mildly latent with mischief Auckland, however, discovered that they were a threat to the existing peaceful relations between the several states along the Indus—a fact, alone sufficient to

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1 *Ibid* 28 November 1826 *op cit*

2 Wade to Governor General's Agent at Delhi 7 August 1823-(P) 94 11

3 Wade to Murray 18 January 1824 (P) 24 5

4 Wade to Metcalfe 29 November 1825 (P) 72 443

5 *Lahore News* Wade to Elliot 24 August 1823 (P) 94 115 Metcalfe to Murray 25 November 1825-(P) 25 160

6 Wade to Colebrooke 11 August, 1823 (P) 96-113 Murray to Colebrooke, 17 August 1829-(P) 75 171

render unsafe the extensive commerce plying on that river[1] It was, therefore, thought essential to promote peaceful relations between Sind and Lahore

It is also important to examine the gradual deterioration of Sikh-Sindhian relations In 1834, the Lahore Government had sent a punitive expedition against the turbulent Mazaris, who from their undefined territory between the Punjab and Sind, were habitually making depredatory raids across the border[2] Sawan Mal the Governor of Multan was ordered to lay waste their country and the Mazari chief, Behram Khan a shifty and ruthless villain escaped virtual extinction by discreetly submitting to him at Amarkot and agreeing to become a Lahore tributary Rojhan, the capital city of the Mazaris was occupied by Lahore forces though not permanently garrisoned[3] The advance of the Sikh army into Sind virtually threatened Shikarpur In 1836, the Mazaris resumed their plundering activities against Lahore This time, Behram Khan raided Mithankot and the Sikh Government suspected that he had been secretly encouraged by the Talpurian Amirs[4] Ranjit Singh now determined to exterminate the Mazaris and annex their territory A formidable force under prince Kharak Singh and General Ventura marched from Multan,[5] and after quickly reducing Rojhan occupied Ken, their second important town[6] At the latter place, Sawan Mal found a Sindhian garrison in occupation and showing stubborn resistance to the Lahore forces[7] The Maharaja had now positive evidence that the Amirs had incited the Mazaris to pillage his territories He, therefore, acted promptly The Sindhian *vakils* at the court of Lahore were put under surveillance,[8] the Amirs were declared tributaries of the Lahore Government, and a payment of 1,200 000 rupees as tribute together with the immediate cession of Shikarpur was demanded from them To back up these demands military preparations were set on foot Kharak Singh was reinforced and ordered to exturt the tribute and attack Shikarpur after the Dussehra festival[9]

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1 Macnaghten to Wade 26 September 1836 (PP) *op cit* No 2 para 3
2 Mackeson to Wade 14 May 1835 (P)106 27
3 Wade to Macnaghten 27 May 183 (P)141 49
4 *Ibid* 5 October 1836 (P)142 70
5 *Ibid* August 1836 (P)142 58
6 *Ibid* same date (P) 142 49
7 Mackeson to Wade 10 October 1836 Governor General to Secret Committee 28 November 1835 BISL(I)
8 Wade to Macnaghten 15 October 1836-(P) 142 76
9 Governor General to Secret Committee 23 November 1836 *ut supra*, Wade to Macnaghten 15 October 1836 (P) 142 78

3 British Mediation

The threatened Sikh advance on Shikarpur prompted the Indian Government to set in motion measures, which had been fully discussed at Calcutta Belatedly, it had made up its mind to oppose any Sikh advance into Sind and to gain political preponderance in that country For the attainment of this objective, a course which Metcalfe had earlier described as that of forced intimacy, had to be adopted, both towards the Sindhians and Lahore The country of Sind had been surveyed politically geographically and militarily The Amirs had been found shifty, weak and unreliable, and in the dire need of some outside power to save them from being swallowed up by Ranjit Singh The Sikh Sindhian dispute provided an excellent opportunity to gain political supremacy without disturbing the distribution of power along the line of the Indus [1] In the autumn of 1836, therefore, it was decided to make an unsolicited offer of British mediation for the settlement of the existing differences between the two States 'I grude this enormous boon to Sind," commented Auckland "No state deserved less of us and we are gratuitously conferring on it the greatest probable benefit, protecting it against the only enemy that it has to fear' [2]

But as a first step, it was imperative that Ranjit Singh should be stopped from making an immediate advance on Shikarpur Consequently, Auckland wrote to him showing his dissatisfaction at his contemplated operations against the Sindhians A friendly remonstrance was made by the Ludhiana Political Assistant, who pointed out to the Maharaja that the British Government had taken a serious view of the Sikh advance on Shikarpur and that he should abandon his hostile intentions towards the territories of the Amirs Wade was further directed to proceed to Lahore and exercise his personal influence with the Maharaja, assuring him, at the same time, that the British Government would adhere scrupulously to its pledges and treaty obligations with regard to the acknowledged dominions of the Labore Government [3]

It was, however, realised that the Lahore Government had genuine grievances against the Amirs in the Mazari affair Wade was, therefore, instructed to assure the Maharaja that his measures against that predatory tribe could not be objected to, and that the further control of the Mazaris could be made a subject of future reference The Maharaja's

1 Macnaghten to Wade 26 September 1836 (P) 107 16

2 Auckland to Hobhouse (Private) 7 October 1836-Broughton (BM) MS No 36473 *fol* 93a

3 Macnaghten to Wade, 26 September 1836-(P) 107 16

arguments against the Sindhians were to be met with a diplomatic untruth He was to be told that the Amirs of Sind had placed themselves under British protection, and that the redress of the real wrongs of the Lahore Government could be obtained by British mediation [1] It was obvious that this move would not only deter Ranjit Singh from advancing on Shikarpur but also subject the settlement of his dispute with the Sind rulers to British arbitration

Meanwhile, the exiled Afghan King, Shah Shuja was again meditating a movement towards Sind Auckland frowned upon the conduct of the Ludhiana pensioner, for, his appearance at this juncture in Sind would have proved most embarrassing to the Indian Government The exiled monarch was, therefore, warned not to stir up disturbances in the neighbouring friendly states The Ludhiana Political Assistant informed him that if he left Ludhiana without the express sanction of the Indian Government, he would forfeit the privilege of asylum and the maintenance allowed to him or his family

Though it was felt certain that the Maharaja would not persist in the invasion of Sind, precautionary measures had to be taken A body of troops ready to move into Sind was placed at the disposal of Col Henry Pottinger, who was to carry on negotiations at Hyderabad Ranjit Singh s application for 50,000 stands of arms, which he had desired to be furnished by way of the Indus, was curtly declined on the ground that the commerce of that river must be peaceful in nature and that he was pursuing an aggressive policy towards his neighbours [2] All this, however, proved unnecessary

4 Deceptive acquiescence

But for a belief, that the Government of India was irretrievably involved in the politics of the countries of the Indus, Auckland would have played a fair game with Ranjit Singh Undue pressure upon him held the risk of disturbing the peaceful schemes of the navigation of the Indus, but it was hoped, that Ranjit Singh would hardly venture to quarrel with the Indian Government Eventually he acceded to the wishes of the Government of India, though with some sulkings [3] Wade

1 *Ibid*

2 Governor General to Secret Committee 20 September 1836 BISL(I) Vol 23 No 3 paras 4 and 11

3 Auckland to Hobhouse (Private) 7 October 1836 Broughton (BM)36473 fol 92 ff

reported from Lahore that the Maharaja had promised to abstain from further aggression upon Sind, and that he was anxious to accept the proferred British mediation in his differences with the Amirs.[1] He readily allowed Burnes to proceed up the Indus to Attock[2] and showed his willingness to support British proposals for the promotion of the commerce of the Indus and the Sutlej.[3] In suspending the immediate occupation of Shikarpur, however, the Maharaja pointed out that the Lahore Government was justified in retaliating on the Mazaris and taking measures to punish the Sindhians for assisting them.[4]

And yet, notwithstanding the avoidance of disagreement and the exchange of fulsome compliments between the Governor-General and the Maharaja, Sindhian politics led the British and the Sikhs to entertain suspicions of each other's motives. Ranjit Singh's easy acquiescence, however, was deceptive. To Wade it gave the false impression of his desire to make the Indian Government a party between the Sindhians and himself.[5] So far as Shikarpur was concerned, the Maharaja was unwilling to relinquish his right to it. He challanged the right of the British Government under the treaty of 1809 to hold intercourse with the countries west of the Indus, or at least, to prevent him from extending his dominion in that direction He claimed that Shikarpur was a dependency of Peshawar and that the Amirs who held that place, were his tributaries,[6] that Shah Shuja had ceded it to him, or at least, assigned half of it in return for a payment of 125,000 rupees in 1832.[7] And finally, the Amirs, who had violated his dominions by wilfully encouraging the Mazaris to make depredations on his territories should surrender it to him.[8]

British arguments against this claim were to the effect that his

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1. Wade to Macnaghten 2 November, 1836-ISP(I), 21 November, 1836 No 12.
2. *Ibid*
3. Auckland to Hobhouse (Private), 7 October, 1836, *op cit*, *fol.* 101.
4. Wade to Macnaghten, 5 October, 1836 ISP(1), 24 October, 1836 No 12.
5. *Ibid* 3 November, 1836-(P) 142.85.
6. Wade to Macnaghten, 5 October, 1836-*op. cit* No. 4; UT, II, 3, p 168 *sq.*
7. *Ibid* 5 September, 1836-(P) 112 61; UT, III, 4, p 578
8. *Ibid* 5 October, 1836 *op cit*. The Lahore Diarist (UT, III, 3, p. 313-14) records that during the Mazari disturbances, Wade had strongly advised Ranjit Singh to occupy Shikarpur; that he had further recommended Sawan Mal's appointment as civil and military administrator of that place He had also suggested that the Multan governor be reinforced to extirpate the Mazaris and Shikarpur be turned into a cantonment for Lahore forces.

title to Shikarpur as a dependency of Peshawar was invalid, for, were it so, it then equally belonged to the Shah of Persia or the Amir of Kabul,[1] that the relations between Shah Shuja and Ranjit Singh were no concern of theirs—at least, the Indian Government had never sanctioned the ex-Shah's late misadventure.[2] It was further contended that the Anglo Sikh treaty of 1809 only restricted the Maharaja's movements to the south of the Sutlej—at least, it did not preclude the British from having relations with the states to the north of that river. At any rate, no mention was made of the countries westward of the Indus.[3] Even admitting that the Amirs had provoked the Maharaja, the British Government could not view with indifference the extension of Sikh power towards the territories of the Amirs, who it was falsely contended, had placed themselves under British protection.[4]

5 An unfair deal

Inspite of these arguments, Auckland frankly admitted that the Sikh ruler was not being given a fair deal in Sind, and that his complaint regarding British interference on his side of the Indus was justified to a great extent. The treaty of 1809, he observed, had restricted the boundary of Sikh ambition to the British side of the Sutlej. He had agreed not to interfere with the Cis Sutlej Sikhs and the British had pledged not to interfere with those under his authority—Sikh or non-Sikh. It had been previously maintained that there was nothing to bar the advance of Sikh power to the right bank of the Sutlej, even where that river merged with the Indus. In the case of Bahawalpur, although there had been no treaty with the Daudpotas, the British had objected to Ranjit Singh's molesting the territories of the Nawab situated on the south of that river. "Are we," wrote Auckland to Sir John Hobhouse, "to put one construction of the treaty at one time and another at another as suits our convenience? If we cannot, we can hardly say that we have any right to interfere between Ranjit Singh and Sind."[5]

6 Arguments of pressure

Discussions at Lahore, however, continued. If the Maharaja had a good argument against the British, Auckland considered it his

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1 Macnaghten to Wade 2 March, 1837 (P) 119 10
2 *Ibid* 26 September 1836
3 *Ibid* 14 November 1836 (P) 107 33
4 *Ib d* 26 September 1836 (P) 107 16 UT, III 4 p 537
5 Auckland to Hobhouse (Private) 7 October 1836 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 93a 94b

duty to prove to him that it was a bad one[1] The force of European politics was being felt at Herat, and it was imperative that the Indian Government should strengthen its influence in Sind The Maharaja had agreed to suspend immediate operations against Shikarpur but not his ultimate designs on Sind Wade's reports began to indicate that he was what he had always been—wily, ambitious, seeking his own aggrandizement, and distrustful of the British as a great power, with a reputation for the reverse of moderation Nevertheless, he was sensible of British friendship and wished to preserve it—'by keeping good faith on his part though with a more swaggering and less friendly tone than usual'[2] Wade's observations surprised Auckland. "I do not like,' he observed, "Wade's altered tone respecting Runjeet Singh He used to laud the latter when there was no good cause and now finds fault with him without much consistency"[3]

Further diplomatic pressure had to be put upon the Sikh ruler to convince him that his interpretation of the treaty was wrong He was told that his reception of a recent mission from Nepal, his admission of the *vakils* from the Cis Sutlej states, his requests for large importations of arms, his successful aggressions upon his neighbours and his intermittent flirtations with the French,[4] were not acceptable to the Government of India So far as the treaty 1809 was concerned, it was pointed out to him that it had aimed at the partition of Sikhs and not of Sind If he attacked Sind, with whom the British

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1 *Ibid fol* 94b

2 *Ibid fol* 94b 95a

3 *Ibid fol* 94b

4 The so-called French flirtations with the Lahore Darbar had caused a mild flutter at this time at Calcutta Towards the close of the year 1836 General Allard an officer of Ranjit Singh's army had returned from Paris bearing a personal letter from emperor Louis Phillipe to Maharaja Ranjit Singh The letter was intercepted and a copy of it was sent to the Home Government alleging that the French were endeavouring to blow the bubble of national importance in the Punjab The British Agent at the Sutlej claimed that Allard had come to Lahore as a duly accredited envoy of the French emperor and that the French Government desired to gain political influence in the Punjab The matter was taken up with the French authorities by the British Ambassador in Paris Ranjit Singh however denied the allegation and assured Lord Auckland that the resort of French adventurers to his Court would be checked as much as it may be in his power to do so (On the subject *vide* Government to Wade, 16 January, 3 April 1837; Wade to Government 15 September 1837, Auckland to Hobhouse, 9 October, 1837 Broughton (BM) 36473 *fol* 197 *ff*)

had lately entered into friendly relations, the Indian Government might reasonably be expected to intervene

With this argument of force rather than of conviction Ranjit Singh felt compelled to agree "He has a good argument, I think against us," observed Auckland, "for passing the supposed barrier and crossing over to his side of the river, but he is prudent and will probably submit by abstaining from any attack on Sind Should it be otherwise, we must, I suppose, take the Punjab and then attack Sind ourselves for some neglect of our orders respecting the navigation of the Indus We are very arbitrary when we take anything into our heads' [1]

While Wade and Ranjit Singh were arguing the fate of Shikarpur, Mackeson, the British Agent for Navigation reported from Mithankot that in consequence of the seizure of Ken by the Lahore troops, the Sindhians were mobilising their forces for an offensive action [2] Kharak Singh's negotiations with the Amirs had assumed a serious shape The Amirs had not only refused to pay the tribute but had also adopted a threatening attitude Unless the British offer of mediation was conveyed to them in time, the intended interposition would become difficult [3]

7 Pottinger's tactics

Henry Pottinger had meanwhile proceeded to Sind with clear cut instructions It was essential that the opportunity of establishing British political influence in Sind on a solid basis should not be neglected [4] A British Resident should be stationed at Hyderabad and a subsidiary force should advance into Sind to protect the Amirs form Ranjit Singh's designs As the reactions of the Amirs to the British propositions could not be foretold, Pottinger was given a free hand in the matter If the Amirs accepted the offer of British help a general defensive agreement could be entered into with them If, on the other hand, they declined to agree, British offer of mediation in the Sikh Sindhian dispute could, subject to their reception of a British Agent at Hyderabad, be made to them

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1 Auckland to Hobhouse 7 October 1836 Broughton (BM) op cit

2 Wade to Macnaghten 7 November 1836 (P) 142 90

3 *Ib d* 28 December 1836 (Enclosure Mackeson s Report 23 December) (P) 142 107

4 Governor General to Secret Committee 28 November 1836 BISL (I) Governor General s Minute 26 December 1836 ISP(I) 23 January 1837

On arrival at Hyderabad Pottinger therefore informed the Amirs that the British Government was willing to enter into a closer alliance with them to save them from virtual extinction at the hands of the Sikh ruler A general defensive engagement could be entered into with them, and their dispute with the Lahore Government made a subject of reference to British mediation The offer was subject to their reception of a British Agent at Hyderabad, and also the stationing of a permanent British detachment at the capital, the expenses of which should be defrayed from the revenues of Sind Only the acceptance of these conditions, they were told, could save them from imminent danger [1]

Wade, who had concealed from the Maharaja the objects of Pottinger's mission, kept him preoccupied with arguments against an advance on Shikarpur If the Amirs agreed to accept British mediation and the necessary armed intervention, he would at once inform the Lahore ruler that Sind had been taken under British protection [2] But the Maharaja's ready acceptance of British proposals and his immediate abandonment of operations in Sind narrowed down Pottinger's objective.[3] The Amirs saw no immediate danger and thought it superfluous to enter into any alliance with the British Government It seemed that the objective of making British influence supreme in Sind could not be accomplished.[4]

Matters thus came to a standstill On 25 November Pottinger reported that the Amirs objected to the permanent residence of a British agent in Sind and adopted a wavering attitude in the adjustment of their differences with the State of Lahore, for which no apparent urgency existed [5] Pottinger next tried to convince Amir Nur Muhammad that the settlement of his dispute with the Sikh ruler without his acceptance of the offer of British mediation could not be effected , that without a permanent British agent in Sind, no medium of communication between the two Governments of Hyderabad and Lahore was practicable [6] To save Sind and Shikarpur, Nur Muhammad must agree to secure both

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1 Macnaghten to Pottinger, 26 September 1836 (PP) XXXIV, 1843 No 3.

2 *Ibid*

3 Governor General to Secret Committee, 2 January, 1837-BISL(I) No 1

4 Governor General's Minute 26 December 1836 ISP(I) 23 January, 1837 No 16.

5 For Pottinger's correspondence on the subject, *vide* ISP(I) 6 March 1837 No 16

6 *Secret Memorandum* by Pottinger (Enclosure 2), para 1-ISP(I) 6 March, 37 No 3

the mediation and protection of the British Government. On the refusal of the Sikh ruler to withdraw his forces British troops were ready to march into Sind To defray the expenses of the Agent and the troops, the Amirs were to cede to the Indian Government a fourth of Shikarpur and its dependencies After a treaty on these lines was concluded with him, the Sindhian *vakils* should be withdrawn from Lahore and the Sind Government should hold no communication with Ranjit Singh except through the British Government [1]

The British designs now became clearer to Nur Muhammad Ranjit Singh had hardly any knowledge of this game of duplicity The Amirs acquiesced in most of these demands, but Nur Muhammad refused to allow a European to reside permanently at Hyderabad The Baluch and the Talpurians, he argued significantly, protested against being spied upon and dictated to by an English gentleman [2] After protracted haggling, he ultimately agreed that a British officer should reside at Shikarpur to conduct further negotiations with Ranjit Singh British troops could only enter Sind if Ranjit Singh refused to give up his enterprise Both Khairpur and Mirpur agreed to cede one fourth of Shikarpur for meeting the expenses of the British Agent So far as the foreign relations of Sind were concerned, Pottinger was told, that the Amirs were on most friendly terms with all their neighbours and that there was no occasion to trouble the British Government on that account, but, in case any necessity arose, the British offer would not be forgotten [3]

8 A blow softened

Of Ranjit Singh's willingness to co operate with the British there were no doubts [4] Instead of advancing on Shikarpur, he was prepared to accept British mediation But he manifested an extreme reluctance to any open abandonment of his claim on Shikarpur and requested that the matter be deferred to a meeting with the Governor General [5] He had now been informed that the Amirs were also prepared to accept British mediation,[6] but in view of their willingness to cede one fourth of Shikarpur to the British to meet the expenses of the Agency and the

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1 *Ibid* paras 3 4 6 and 8

2 Pottinger to Government 1 February 1837 ISP(I) 6 March 1837 No 5 Enclosure B

3 *Ibid*

4 Macnaghten to Pottinger 2 January 1837 ISP(I) 23 January 1837 No 17

5 Governor General to Secret Committee 10 April 1837 BISL(I) No 3

6 Macnaghten to Ranjit Singh 2 January 1837 ISP(I) 23 January 1837, No 18

military force to be stationed in Sind, the Maharaja's discussion of the subject with the Governor-General had now become very embarrassing Wade was therefore directed to abstain from provoking further discussions on the subject A deferment, it was believed, would more likely lead to an ultimate abandonment of the claim by the Maharaja [1]

It was therefore, preferred that the blow to the Maharaja be softened as far as practicable Macnaghten therefore wrote personally to Ranjit Singh that the attitude of the Lahore Government had been viewed with satisfaction by the Governor General, who was pleased with his implicit confidence in the British Government He further assured him that British interference had no other aim except the preservation of peace and prosperity of his dominions and the neighbouring powers The Amirs of Sind were prepared to accept British mediation in their dispute with Lahore—this he was told, would be to his advantage [2] With such empty phrases British diplomacy endeavoured to soothe the suspicious Sikh ruler

9 Pottinger reprimanded

But Pottinger bungled at Hyderabad In the course of his negotiations, he assured the Amirs that as a preliminary step to help them, the Indian Government would demand from Ranjit Singh the immediate removal of Sikh troops from their territories [3] The assurance, if given effect to, would have involved the evacuation of the Mazari territory including Rojhan and Ken by the Lahore Government and the abandonment of its position on the Sind frontiers It would also have rendered meaningless British interposition and the offer of mediation The Mazari country was the main point of dispute between the Mabaraja and the Amirs To pledge its evacuation by Lahore would have given an impression of a decision beforehand in favour of the Amirs [4]

Pottinger was sharply reprimanded for this move It was pointed out that he had needlessly exceeded his instructions Ranjit Singh had agreed to everything, and the measures which were being contemplated at Calcutta to counteract the rumoured Russo-Persian threat to the Indian frontiers, made it expedient not to give him an undue cause

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee 10 April 1837 *op cit*

2 Macnaghten to Ranjit Singh 2 January 1837 *op cit*

3 Pottinger to Government 31 January 1837 ISP(I) 6 March 1837 No 12 para 3

4 Government to Pottinger 2 March 1837 *op cit*

for grievance "The Maharaja, "wrote Macnaghten, "is a powerful chief. He has been a most faithful and consistent ally to us, and deserves to he treated hy us with the greatest consideration "[1] It was admitted that he could justly demand idemnification for any losses from the Sindhian Amirs or their dependents It was one thing to dissuade him from invading Sind, hut he appeared to be quite justified in his ndvance into the Mazari territory

10 Sindhian dilatoriness

It was further ohvious to the Indian Government that the Sindhians bad encouraged the depredations of the Mazaris into the Lahore territories, and even if not directly involved, had viewed their lawlessness with alleged supineness The Amirs had denied their guilt, hut the British Government was convinced of their connivance in the matter At least, the presence of n Sindhian contigent at Ken could not be denied [2]

Pottinger had, therefore, to modify his assurances to the Amirs to the extent that the investigation of the Mazari frontier dispute would be taken up preparatory to a mediation of other matters [3] Both Wade and Pottinger were cautioned that the British offer of mediation was, in a restrictive sense, suggestive rather than authoritative it was dependent on the concurrence of hoth the states [4]

To this the Amirs did not agree but insisted upon a preliminary withdrawal of Lahore forces from the Mazari territory The assurance that they should rely upon the impartiality of Mackeson, who had heen entrusted with this task, carried little weight with them [5] Ultimately Ranjit Singh was told that tbe evacuation of Rojhan would greatly facilitate the adjustment of his existing differences with the Amirs Once again, the Maharaja yielded to the British request

Even this did not satisfy the shifty Amirs, who now adopted a dilatory attitude They produced counter-proposals, which were at

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1 *Ibid* para 4

2 Pottinger to Government 10 December 1836 and 31 January, 1837-ISP(I) 6 March 1837 Nos 3 and 12 Government to Pottinger, 1 January 1837, *op cit*

3. Government to Pottinger, 2 March 1837 *op cit*, para 6

4 Governor General to Secret Committee, 27 December 1837-BISL(I) Vol 23 No 22 para 2 For correspondence *vide* ISP(I) 24 April 1837, No 14 15 May, 1837, Nos 1 3

5 *Ibid* para 3

variance with the form of agreement proposed by Pottinger, and finding the British pressure intolerable, opened up direct negotiations with Lahore for the settlement of the Mazari question The terms, reported the Ludhiana Political Assistant, "might be construed as intended to lay the foundation of the claims of superiority on the part of the Maharaja, sanctioned by British authority"[1]

This clever move, if countenanced by Ranjit Singh, would have practically undone Pottinger's manoeuvring in Sind, but the Lahore Government stood to its undertaking As the Sindhian fish tried to wriggle out of the net of British diplomacy, the Indian Government pulled the string tighter Wade was instructed to point out to the Maharaja that the British Government would not become a party to any arrangement which would subvert the independence of any state[2] Pottinger told the Amirs that they were manifesting an aversion to form an alliance with the only power competent to render them aid, that if they continued to adopt that attitude, the British Government would refrain in the future from interfering to promote their welfare or secure their independence[3] In short, the Amirs were warned either to accept a forced political alliance with the British or to meet their doom

11 Treaty of subservience

The Amirs still hesitated to come to terms They agreed to the offer of British mediation but were not inclined to accept the view that such mediation could only be carried out by a British Agent stationed at their court Pottinger now warned them that unless they conceded this point, the British Government would not exert its presure on Ranjit Singh for the restoration of the Mazari districts or the abandonment of his designs against Sind[4] The Sindhians had now no choice in the matter They agreed to receive a British Agent at Hyderabad In return, they were informed that the Lahore Government had left the question of the Mazari districts and the removal of the Sikh garrison from Rojhan to the determination of the British Government[5] At

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1 For Wade's correspondence on the subject *vide* BPC(I) 31 July 1837 Nos 38 42 25 September 1837 Nos 74 77

2 Governor General to Secret Committee 27 December 1837 *op cit* para 12

3 *Ibid* para 13 BPC(I) 31 July, 1837 Nos 16 22

4 Governor General to Secret Committee 21 February 1838 BISL(I) No 4 para 2

5 *Ibid* para 4 BPC(I) 8 November 1837, No 38 27 October 1837 No 48

length, after some wranglings, a treaty was concluded on 20 April, 1838. It merely stipulated that the British Government would engage to use its good offices in the adjustment of the Sikh-Sindhian dispute and that the Amirs, on their part, would receive an accredited British Minister at Hyderabad.[1] Sind, reported Auckland, must be made subservient, and the treaty was a first stage in the steady accomplishment of British objects.[2]

12. Observations on policy

The British objective in Sind, which began with Burnes' mission in 1830 up the river Indus, was now well-nigh complete. Sind was certainly saved from Sikh domination; it was soon devoured by British imperialism. Soon events in Persia, Afghanistan and beyond the Caspian were to outstrip the Indian Government's foreign policy. On the north-western frontier, the supposed Russo-Persian threat was to loom large and soon in the new political drama to be enacted, the British were to need the active co-operation of the Lahore Government. The Amirs in their hapless state, were to witness the ruin of their country by Shah Shuja's levies, and the Army of the Indus was to march through Sind to Kandahar and thence to Jalalabad and Kabul. Auckland's attempt to reinstate the Ludhiana pensioner on the throne of his ancestors far exceeded what both the Sindhians and the Sikhs could offer to the British Government. Ranjit Singh, watched in distraction and assumed interest, the advance of Shah Shuja's son supported by British bayonets, through the heart of the Punjab and the Khyber Pass. British diplomacy had thwarted permanently his ambitions in the south towards Shikarpur and Sind; perhaps fate would see them materialise in the north. If the prophecy of the Gurus was to be fulfilled, the *Khalsa*, he hoped, might yet be able to fly the saffron ensign at Jalalabad, Ghazni and Kabul.

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1. For Treaty, *vide*. (PP) XXXIV, 1843. No. 7.
2. Auckland to Hobhouse, 3 May, 1838-Broughton Papers (BM) 36473, *fol.* 245ab.

CHAPTER X

THE RUSSOPHOBIA AND MACNAGHTEN'S MISSION, 1838

1 Russia in Central Asia

During the opening decades of the nineteenth century, Russian influence in Persia had steadily increased[1] Russia annexed Persian territory and provinces particularly Georgia and Armenia, and the treaty of Gulistan (1813) had virtually turned the Caspian into a Russian lake The Anglo Persian treaty of 1814, as a counterpoise to Russian influence in Persia proved a dead letter, as its provisions for aiding Persia in the event of an invasion by a European power, were never put into force This became evident when the Czar's armies forced Fateh Ali Shah to accept the disgraceful terms of the treaty of Turkomanchi in 1828 Canning dismissed the Shah's appeal for assistance under the treaty of Tehran by branding the Persians as aggressors He could ill afford to jeopardise his Balkan enterprise by a rupture with the Russians

Canning's Central Asian policy had thus thrown the unwilling Persians into the arms of Russia Within a few years, Russia obtained complete control of Persia's foreign policy and coaxed and encouraged by the former, the Shah began to entertain ideas of expansion towards Khiva, Khorasan and Bukhara and already attacked Herat and intrigued with Kandahar

From 1828, the growth of Russian influence in northern Persia increasingly warned those resposible for the conduct of British policy, both Palmerston in London and Bentinck in India The 'encroaching

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1 On the subject see particularly, Lord Palmerston s Papers on the attitude of Russia in Persia and Afghanistan—*Broughton Papers* (British Museum) Vol XIV *fol* 279 337 Auckland s private correspondence with Sir John Hobhouse Broughton Papers(BM) MS 36473 discloses how the Russo Persian threat effected the Government of India and the measures to counteract it which were adopted by it can be read in the subsequent volume (MS 36474) both covering the period 1835 1841 For further sources generally see Rawlinson *England and Russia in the East* Edwardes *Russian Projects in India* Boulger *England and Russia in Central Asia* Kaye *History of War in Afghanistan* Aitchison *Treaties Engagements etc* (volumes dealing with Persia and Afghanistan) and the Blue Books on Papers relating to Afghanistan XL 1839 XXV(30) 1843 XXXVIII(3) (13) (17) and XXV(7) 1859

spirit of a vast autocracy" persuaded the otherwise peaceful Governor-General to open the Indus to commerce Bentinck's measures, however, show that the Government of India had realised in 1835, if not earlier, the possibility of a Russian advance to the Indus, and that, Afghanistan could serve as a buffer state between India and Persia. Herat was the key to Kabul, and a combined Russo-Persian campaign for its possession was considered a possibility Though the feasibility of a Russian attack on India was much more remote, yet it was realised that if Herat were occupied by Persia, her ally Russia "may proclaim a crusade against British India." In that event, the buffer state of Afghanistan would make virtue out of necessity by joining Russia, receiving in reward for its co-operation, the promise of restoration of Afghan provinces wrested from it by the Sikhs. It was believed that a force of 20,000 men fully equipped, accompanied by a body of 100,000 horsemen might reach the Indus [1]

2 Situation in 1836

Early in 1836 when Lord Auckland arrived in India, he found that Bentinck's weak policy had displeased everyone Ranjit Singh objected to the embargo placed upon his advance towards Sind and Shikarpur The Sindhian Amirs who had chafed under Pottinger's high-handed tactics, were now acutely suspicious of the Indus Navigation Scheme Dost Muhammad, the Amir of Kabul still nursed a grudge against the British for countenancing Shah Shuja's fiasco in 1834

While Bentinck's Minute of 13 March, 1835 had made a strong impression at home, Ellis' and MacNeill's despatches from Tehran stressed on Lord Palmerston the danger from Russian intrigues [2] It is evident from Palmerston Papers that the Home Government considered Russian encouragement of Persian aggression on Herat a positive threat to India's north-western frontier.[3] Instructions were, therefore, issued to the Government of India to take steps to counteract Russian influence in Persia and interfere decidedly in the affairs of Afghanistan The Governor-General was particularly authorised to enter into commercial or political relations with Dost Muhammad, for, it was deemed essential to prevent Persian influence in Afghanistan and to

1 Governor-General's Minute, 13 March 1835- reproduced in Boulger, p 174 *ff*

2 See particularly those of Ellis to Palmerston of 13 November, 24 December, 1835 and 15 January 1836-(PP) XL 1839 also of MacNeill to Palmerston 12 December, 1836 and 24 February, 1837, *op cit*

3 Broughton Papers(BM), Vol XIV, *fol* 279 *sq*

raise a timely barrier against the impending encroachments of Russian intrigues in that quarter

Upto this time, the Indian Government had pursued a policy of cautious neutrality with regard to the countries beyond the Indus, and except for commercial intercourse, it had been averse to any political alliance with Afghanistan [1] It considered the British embassy in Tehran far too apprehensive of Persian threats to Herat and of Russian influence on the Shah Neither did Auckland place much reliance on the despatches of Ellis, the Ambassador in Persia [2] The countries beyond Lahore were too distant and politics beyond the Indus were extremely confused [3] The authorities in India could boast of an improved connection with Sind the suspension of Ranjit Singh's schemes of violence in the south, and fondly hoped that the ambitious Sikh ruler would instead look towards the mountains of Kabul and Kandahar The strength of Herat was greatly exaggerated, for, it was imagined that with the help of the Turcomans it would prove more than a match for Persia It was also supposed that McNeill had improved his position at the Shah's court and had persuaded Muhammad Shah to think less of foreign conquest Afghanistan was a weak buffer, and the Kabul Chief, Dost Muhammad a shifty opportunist, who lived in constant dread and disgrace of defeat at the hands of the Sikhs "In his pressing need," observed Auckland, 'he has courted Russia, and he has courted us, but it would be madness in us, though we may wish to see his independence assured, to quarrel with the Sikhs for him' [4]

3 *The Sikhs and the Afghans*

The impression that the Sikhs were more than a match for the Afghans was strengthend by the Indian Commander in Chief's visit to Lahore in March 1837, on the occasion of the marriage of the Maharja's grandson Kanwar Naunihal Singh [5] Sir Henry Fane had been impressed by Ranjit Singh's paralytic but yet vigorous appearance and his hatred of the Afghans The military power of the Sikhs, he observed, consisted of 60 to 70 regiments of infantry, 700 pieces of artillery and a large cavalry force. Fane's report contains plentiful speculations on the

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1 Auckland to Hobhouse 28 May 1836 Broughton(BM) 36473 *fol* 54a
2 *Ibid* 20 June 1836 *fol* 70a
3 *Ibid* 9 April 1837, *fol* 138a
4 *Ibid fol* 138b
5 An account of Sir Henry Fane's interesting report is contained in Auckland to Hobhouse (Private), 9 April 1837 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 138b 142b

British forces necessary for the destruction of the military might of the Lahore Maharaja He found Ranjit Singh highly sceptical of the Indus Navigation Scheme and benevolently tolerant of the Russo-Persian threat, observing mischieviously, that travellers from Persia had informed him that the Russians intended to rescue the King of Delhi ! The British General also noted the excitement prevalent at the Darbar concerning the imminent Sikh Afghan tussle in the north "Ranjit Singh," soon afterwards wrote Auckland, "talks to us as if he wished for universal peace and that some of the people about him would goad him on to an universal war. His army is still looking on the hills of Afghanistan with some appetite for advancing to Kabul He assures Wade that this shall not be, but I would not pledge myself that it will not be "[1]

In the Sikh Afghan dispute, Peshawar was the bone of contention Ranjit Singh had wrested it from the Afghans in 1834, and since then, the Barakzais had tried to regain it by every means in their power. Late in 1834, Dost Muhammad bad applied to the Indian Government for their support in its restoration to him In return for help, he promised to wage a holy war on the Sikhs and showed his readiness to stop the Persian advance on Herat and counteract Russian influence in Afghanistan [2] Masson, the British news-writer at Kabul, binted to the British Agent at Ludhiana that the Amir's offer meant the extension of British influence in Afghanistan [3] The idea, at tbat time, appealed so much to Wade that he began to argue seriously witb the Lahore Government on the futility of its retention of Peshawar, and to his own government, he proposed that tbe British should try to persuade the Sikhs to restore it to the Afghans [4] His suggestion was, however, considered premature and he was cautioned not to encourage either the Sikhs or the Afghans [5]

In the spring of 1835, Ranjit Singh's armies swarmed around Peshawar to stop the Barakzais advance on it No battle took place but both the Maharaja and the Amir met on 11 May at the mouth of the Khyber to settle the issue peacefully The Sikhs, however, worsted the Afghans in the negotiations, and the Afghan delegation prudently retired after the defection of the Amir's brother Sultan Muhammad

1 Auckland to Hobbouse 26 May 1837 Broughton *op cit fol* 155 *ff*
2 Wade to Macnaghten 4 January 1835 (P) 141 1
3 *Ibid* 13 February 1835 (P) 141 9
4 *Ibid* also Wade 15 April 1835 (P) 141 25
5 Macnaghten to Wade 20 April 1835 (P) 118 25

Meanwhile Wade's persuations at Lahore had opened up a chance of British mediation in the Sikh-Afghan dispute Burnes was, therefore, directed to inform Dost Muhammad that the Indian Government would exert its friendly influence with the Sikh ruler, if he abjured all connection with Russia [1] The Maharaja was still suspicious of Burnes' conversations with the Kabul Amir If, as Wade told him, the British mission was a strictly commercial one, why did Burnes linger on at the Amir's court ? These suspicions were further increased by Wade's continued hints that the Maharaja should abandon his hostile designs against the Afghans,[2] and that he should give up Peshawar as it was not worth retaining at such an enormous cost in men and money [3]

Wade's arguments led the Sikh ruler to ask for British advice in the matter Auckland, however, was not prepared to render it until the outcome of Burnes' negotiations at Kabul was fully known The Maharaja was finally told that the British Government could not interfere in this matter,[4] but if he wished, Burnes would communicate from him any fair and moderate offer to the Afghan chief All this surprised Ranjit Singh, who now felt quite uneasy at Burnes' continued presence at Kabul [5] He suspected that the British would appease the Afghans at the cost of the Sikhs by making him give up Peshawar Measures were, therefore, taken to reinforce Peshawar The Sikhs, it seemed, possessed adequate means of retaining it

Burnes had no authority to promise to the Afghans that Peshawar would be restored to them and yet, he encouraged Dost Muhammad to hope that it would be ceded to him He was convinced that if the Amir could be freed from the fear of the Sikhs, his power in Afghanistan could be rendered durable The Punjab, in his opinion, would crumble to pieces should a weak ruler succeed Ranjit Singh The Afghans, in that event, would be the natural heirs to his northern domains The British Government, he suggested, should consolidate Dost Muhammad's power , and if properly subsidised, he could be detached from Russo Persian influence He should, therefore, be protected from Sikh attacks and Peshawar should be restored to him [6]

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1 Macnaghten to Burnes 11 September 1837 (P) 119 55

2 Wade to Macnaghten 9 July 1837 (P) 143 26

3 UT, III p 4 *ff*

4 Auckland to Hobhouse (Private) 5 August and 8 September 1837 Broughton (BM) 36473 *fol* 177a and 189a

5 *Ibid*, 9 October 1837 *op cit fol* 197a

6 Burnes to Macnaghten 3 December, 1837 (P) 108 53

5 Wade's Views

Wade, on the other hand, strongly opposed Burnes' propositions He withheld Dost Muhammad's proposals from the Lahore Darbar and commented freely on Burnes' despatches to the Government of India, which the latter was obliged to submit through the Ludhiana Agency He advised Auckland that an alliance with the powerful Sikh was better than one with the weak Barakzai, that an offer of money to the Afghans to wage war with the Sikhs was deplorable, that Ranjit Singh would never relinquish Peshawar and that British interests required the maintenance of existing balance of power in Afghanistan [1]

So far, the Government of India had refused to intervene in the Sikh Afghan dispute It had rightly clung to the conviction that the differences between the Sikhs and the Afghans were too violent and of irreconcilable nature to admit of any successful British interposition Consequently, Wade had to be taciturn at Lahore, he could merely express to the Maharaja the hope of his government that peace would soon be established between the two contending parties [2] Auckland himself admits that in this matter, which required a clear sighted vigour, he had been playing a game in the dark with his hands tied [3] But Wade's sound arguments, and the arrival, late in December 1837, at the Amir's Court of the Russian Agent Vickovich, strengthened Aucklaad's conviction that the Indian Government should be drawn into a closer defensive and offensive alliance with the Sikhs [4] It was therefore decided that Burnes should retire from Kabul and the cautious mistrust of the old Sikh ally removed [5]

Consequently, Burnes' "active imprudence" was checked well in time The Kabul chief was told that he ought to be thankful for being saved from an actual invasion by the Sikhs,[6] and that he should unlearn the methods of bluster and practice humility and peace [7] To the Sikh chief, the Governor General wrote more explicitly on western

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1 Wade to Macnaghten 7 November 21 December 1837 (P) 141 49 145 16 7 January 1838 (P) 145 24

2 Governor General to Secret Committee 5 August 1837 BSPC(I) Vol 23, No 9 paras 8 and 15

3 Auckland to Hobhouse 3 May 1838 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 244b

4 *Ibid*

5 *Ibid* 3 June 1838 *op cit fol* 252b

6 *Ibid* 6 February 1838 *op cit fol* 219b

7 *Ibid* 13 February, 1838 *op cit fol* 225b

politics He was assured that Burnes was being recalled from Kabul and that the interests of the two governments were the same [1]

6 Russophobia at Fort William

With the news of the Persian siege of Herat, Russophobia increased at Calcutta. Ellis continued to harp on the Russian advance westwards. McNeill had failed to mediate between Persia and Herat. Dost Muhammad had received a Czarist agent at Kabul, another had arrived at Herat and yet another was rumoured to be on his way to Lahore [2] Wade began to inform Ranjit Singh in confidence of the contents of McNeill's despatches from Tehran Rumours about the infiltration of Russian spies into India gained currency. The Bombay Government reported that the Armenian priesthood in India was operating on behalf of Russia and the Persian Gulf Residency recommended measures regarding their selection and ordination in India [3]

The cumulative effect of these rumours on the minds of Indian officials—Auckland, Macnaghten, Burnes and Wade was clear. The expected menace had revealed itself at last at Kabul if not at Lahore The Sikh chief entered into the spirit by prohibiting the entry of the imaginary Russian emissary into his dominions, proving positively that western influence was creeping closer to the Company's frontiers on the Sutlej

Interesting though confused speculations were rife at Calcutta. That the fall of Herat would be followed by Russian domination of Persia and Afghanistan, was considered quite certain. The failure of the Shah's expedition to Herat, on the other hand, would weaken Persia and increase further Russian influence at Tehran. Russian agents at the Persian capital were acting in open hostility to British interests The defeat of Herat against Persian aggression seemed to be of the utmost importance Kandahar should be controlled Kabul was to cease all intrigue with Russia, and Dost Muhammad, even if willing to exist by the breath of the British Government, must abandon all dreams of Peshawar Finally, Ranjit Singh was to be placated at all costs [4] It had become necessary to smother his mistrust and cultivate his friendship Personally, it would have given gratified Auckland "to unleash Ranjit Singh's dogs of war" on the Afghans, but he con-

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1 *Ibid* 8 September, 1837 *op cit*, *fol* 19a-b

2 Burnes to Macnaghten, 8 December, 1837 (P) 108 63

3 Macnaghten to Wade 27 August 1838 (P) 121 27 (Enclosure)

4 Auckland to Hobhouse (Private) 6 January, 13 February, 9 April and 13 May, 1838 Broughton Papers (BM) *fol* 219b, 225b, and 243b-244b,

sidered it doubtful whether the Sikhs could influence the fate of Herat from Kabul [1]

Amidst this confusion and uncertainty, the Government of India decided to exert its imperfect influence on western politics "It is a fine embroglio of diplomacy and intrigue," lamented Auckland, "with more of bluster than of real strength anywhere Yet it is impossible not to feel that the East and West are drawing sensibly nearer to each other "[2]

Though the decision to retain the Sikh chief as an ally and to destroy Dost Muhammad had been reached, Burnes was allowed to linger on at Kabul, in the hope that his presence might secure the neutrality of Kabul and Kandahar Conjectures were rife as to what would follow after Herat had fallen "The *sunnis* of Afghanistan," commented Auckland, "will hate the *shias*, but both will probably hate the Sikhs more than they hate each other, and all may readily combine with Russia and Persia for further mischief "[3]

7 Schemes for subversion

Schemes discussed by the Government of India for the subversion of the authority of the ruler of Kabul provide a fascinating study [4] The best means of destroying Dost Muhammad's power, it was argued, would be to employ the Sikhs against him, directly, or through the agency of the Barakzai Amir's brother Sultan Muhammad Khan, a Lahore dependent and a bitter enemy of Dost Muhammad The second alternative was to restore the ex king of Afghanistan, Shah Shuja, residing then in exile under British protection at Ludhiana Any such measure, whether taken collectively or severally, must be under British influence and sanction

If it were British policy to weaken Ranjit Singh, the best way was to encourage the Sikhs to march on Kabul The Sikhs with their superior resources and disciplined troops, could easily overrun the hills of Afghanistan, and they might even capture Kabul , although its permanent retention, as in the case of Peshawar, might prove too costly for them Conversely, Kabul could be held by them far more

1 *Ibid* 3 May 1838 *op cit fol* 244b
2 *Ibid* 6 January, 1838, *fol* 219
3 *Ibid* 3 May 1838 *fol* 245a
4 The following analysis unless otherwise stated is based upon Auckland's Enclosures in private letters to Hobhouse during the year 1838 Broughton Papers (BM) 36473 *fol* 369a-375b,

easily than Peshawar From the Afghan capital they could eliminate all hostile encouragemeot to their interests towards Peshawar, which the Khyheris and the Yusifzais habitually obtained from Afghaositan Once Kahul was redueed Peshawar area would hecome safe for the Sikhs aod the tribal people subside into peaceful subjects of the Lahore Government But the Afghaos, it was argued further, were equally hrave and far more faoatical thao the Sikhs They might eodure the rule of the Sikhs but not their religious intolerance Kahul, therefore, could ooly he held hy the Sikhs iodependeotly with a large army "If it were resolved to give Ranjit Siogh a fair chaoce of destructioo also," ohserved Auckland, "the hest plao that could he devised would he to encourage him to proceed agaiost that place "[1] It is, however, extremely douhtful whether Ranjit Singh, who had no serious desigos of annexing Kabul to his dominioos, could he persuaded to invade Afghanistan

The plan of establishing the Peshawar Barakzai, Sultan Muhammad Khan was equally uosouod Sikh military intervention in Afghanistan would be equivalent to the establishment of Sikh power at Kabul at the cost of British influence Sultan Muhammad Khan possessed oeither influence nor capacity to act except as an instrument of Sikh ambition[2] The British eould perhaps exert more pressure on Lahore oearer the Sutlej than influence Kabul through a questionahle ageney in Afghaoistan with victorious Sikh forces intervening between the Sutlej and the Khyher

The suggestion that Shah Shuja, the Ludhiana pensioner he restored to the throne of Kahul with the help of Sikh arms had origioated with Wade, the Ludhiana Political Assistant in 1836[3] The measure, he argued, would establish a coofederacy of states on the Iodus to couoteract aoy threat of hostilities from the West Macnaghten had improved upon Wade's idea io a scheme of his own, which eovisaged the restoration of the exiled Shah to the throne of Kahul as "a subsidized mooarach ' with the military strength of Ranjit Siogh—the long standing Sikh-Afghan dispute regarding Peshawar, Kashmir aod Sind being settled through British mediatioo Macoaghten's proposals aimed at the revival of the now defunet Sikh-Afghan Agreement of 1833, which was to he the sheet-anehor of British policy io Afghaoistan

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1 *Ibid* Extract No 2.

2. *Ibid* Extract No 3

3 Wade to Macnaghten 7 June, 1836 (P) 142 36

Burnes' suggestion to Auckland was, however, more direct.[1] He agreed both with Wade and Macnaghten that Shah Shuja could easily replace the Barakzai chief at Kabul, but to assure the complete success of the plan, he pointed out, the British Goverement must appear directly in it and not to leave in to the Sikhs themselves. The Maharaja's help in the venture should be confined to four or five regiments which have no Sikhs in their ranks. From Peshawar, Burnes observed, the Shah, with the co-operation of the British and the Sikhs, would have only to appeal to the Khyberis, to the tribesmen of Afghanistan, and with a little distribution of ready money, say two or three lacs of rupees, he would find himself the real King of Afghanistan in a couple of months.[2]

8. Shah Shuja and Ranjit Singh

At this place, it is necessary to review British interest in the ex-Shah's earlier attempts to regain the throne of his ancestors with Sikh help.

Shah Shuja's earlier attempts to regain his throne with the help of Ranjit Singh were frowned upon by the Government of India. In 1826, when the Sikh ruler tried to lure him into the venture, the Ludhiana Political Agent discouraged the Shah to accept Ranjit Singh's offer.[3] A year later (1827), the British Government positively declined to assist or countenance Shah Shuja in any such project. He was warned that if he failed to re-establish himself at Kabul, the Government would have no obligation to renew the asylum granted to him at Ludhiana.[4] His similar overtures to the Lahore ruler in 1829 and 1830 were met with unconcealed derision. The reason for such an attitude on the part of the British Government appeared to be a general impression that the Sikh chief was trying to amuse himself at the expense of the unfortunate Afghan exile.[5]

And yet in 1831, the Shah had foolishly bartered away for an uncertain Sikh help, the much-coveted Afghan provioces of Kashmir and Peshawar and their dependencies. His desperation sharpened the Sikh ruler's appetite, who demanded from the Shah a formal relin-

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1. Broughton Papers(BM), *op. cit.*, Auckland-17 June, 1837, *fol* 264b.
2. *Ibid.*, *fol.* 265a.
3. Wade to Metcalfe, 25 July, 27 September, 1826-(P) 95 29,35.
4. Ulilson (Assistant to Resident at Delhi) to Wade, 7 July, 1827-(P) 115-19.
5. Colebrooke to Wade, 19 May, 1829; Wade to Hawkins, 21 July, 1830-(P) 95-98

quishment of all claims to the Afghan territory in the north-west and the south west which had been conquered by the Sikhs [1] The Indian Government knew the substance of the Shah s negotiations with Ranjit Singh but refused to be drawn into the matter [2] The Shah desired a loan from the British Government for his expedition to Afghanistan, British military advisers to accompany him and an assurance of protection to his family at Ludhiana during his absence [3] Bentinck told him curtly that his venture was his own affair, and that in view of the neutral policy of the Indian Government, his request for money or military officers could not be complied with An assurance was however, given to him that during his absence his family would not be abandoned to destitution [4]

Ranjit Singh, who had his own reasons to make good use of the Shah s name in furtherance of his designs on Afghan possessions sounded the Indian Government whether the ex king was proceeding on his expedition under its sanction He also suggested that the Lahore and British Governments should come to an understanding about the Shah's movements [5]

9 British indifference

But the Government of India was completely indifferent to the Shah's venture The Maharaja was informed that though the Govern ment had felt unjustified in placing an embargo on the Shah's movements it had refused direct aid to him Early in March 1833, Ranjit Singh again enquired whether the Shah's intention to proceed to Kandahar had British concurrence Bentinck informed him on 30 April, that the Government of India had no concern or interest in the Shah's attempt for the recovery of his throne [6]

Similarly, Dost Muhammad s overtures for a friendly alliance were treated with an equal indifference Though more than a meddling curiosity was required to arouse the Government of India from the torpor of neutrality, yet British officials—Wade from Ludhiana and Mackeson from Mithankot, kept it fully informed of the Shah's arrival

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1 Wade to Prinsep 21 November 1830 (PP)XL 1839 No 3 (Enclosure 1)

2 Prinsep to Wade 4 December 1831 (PP) *op cit* No 3 (Enclosure 2)

3 Shah Shuja to Bentinck 20 September 1832-(PP) *op cit* No 7

4 Lord Bentinck to Shah Shuja *op cit* No 9

5 Wade to Macnaghten 9 February 1833 *op cit* No 9 Fraser to Macna ghten 21 February 1833 *op cit* No 22

6 Ranjit Singh to Metcalfe 13 March 1833 Bentinck to Ranjit Singh 30 April, 1833 (PP) *op cit* No 27

at Bahawalpur and Shikarpur and of Ranjit Singh's reactions to it[1] British indifference was amply reciprocated both by Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja, they were disinclined to divulge the terms of the treaty entered into between them Wade reported that both were unwilling to take him into confidence

By the Sikh-Afghan agreement of March 1833, the Lahore ruler wrested from the Afghans an admission of his equality in rank as a sovereign of the Punjab The ex Shah renounced his claim to all territories on either bank of the Indus and gave up every pretension to Afghan possessions conquered by the Sikhs The question of Shikarpur and the Sindhian territory lying on the right bank of the Indus was left open to future mediation by the British Government[2]

When informed about it, the Government of India took great exception to being made a third party in an agreement without its concurrence The irregularity of the procedure was pointed out both to the Shah and Maharaja, with the observation, that such an action on their part was not consistent with the laws of nations[3]

During the years 1833 1835, Shah Shuja's movements were neither sanctioned nor prohibited The only assistance, which the Shah could obtain from the Indian Government was the advance of 4 months' stipend (16 000 rupees) The Sikh Afghan agreement was viewed with derisive indifference The Shah s debacle at Shikarpur and his rupture with the Sindhian Amirs was treated with unconcern, and his rout at Kandahar at the hands of the confederated Afghan chiefs, with complete indifference While the Indian Government fought shy of giving any countenance or support to Shah Shuja, it was eager to receive him back at Ludhiana[4]

10 Decision to Act

But now Auckland decided that this complacent neutrality should be forsaken and the Sikh Afghan agreement of 1833 to restore Shah Shuja to Kabul be revived His plan was a modified version of both Wade's and Macnaghten s If Persia should succeed against Herat and advance upon Afghanistan he argued in his Minute of 12 May 1838,

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1 Wade to Macnaghten 9 June 23 July 1833 and 1 February 1834 Mackeson to Wade 22, 27 and 30 May 1833–(PP) XL 1839

2 For the treaty *vide* (PP) XL 1839 No (3) 46

3 *Wade to Ranj t Singh and Shah Shuja* 7 June 1834 Enclosure in Wade to Macnaghten 17 June 1834 (PP) *op cit* No 46

4 Governor General to Secret Comm ttee 5 March 1838 BISL(I)

the Indian Government had but three courses to follow It could confine its defensive measures to the line of the Indus and leave Afghanistan to its fate—a course equivalent to an absolute defeat, which would leave a free opening to Russo-Persian intrigues upon the Indian frontiers Secondly, to save Afghanistan by helping Kabul and Kandahar rulers—an equally dangerous procedure, which would ultimately result in strengthening the Afghans against the Sikhs than against the Persians.

The third course, which could be adopted, whether Herat fell or maintained its independence, was to encourage the Sikhs to advance upon Kabul and to organise an expedition headed by Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk [1] It would fix British influence in Afghanistan, secure peace in in Sind, confirm friendship with Lahore and, at the same time, dissipate Sikh military strength [2]

Thus Burnes' failure at Kabul and Dost Muhammad's intrigues with Russia and Persia had convinced the Government of India that it was essential to organise resistance to Persia east of Afghanistan And in order to safeguard the whole unprotected eastern frontier, the best course appeared to act in close harmony with the Sikhs [3] The Sikh-Afghan differences, which two years earlier appeared too violent and irreconcilable, still seemed beyond repair, but it was fondly believed, that if the Saddozai exile could re establish his authority at Kabul with British approval and Sikh arms, the Sikh-Afghan tension could be made reasonably moderate The old Shah, it was hoped, when restored, would not only be friendly towards the Sikhs, but, also in consideration for British help in the enterprise, support British interests [4]

It was, therefore, decided in May 1838 to send a British mission to Lahore to inform Ranjit Singh of the probable advance of the Persians upon Kandahar. In that eventuality, it was to be pointed out, the British Government might be forced to take up measures for defence, the first of which would be the advance of a military force to the Indus The restoration of Shah Shuja was to be left open to discussions [5]

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1 Governor-General s Minute, 12 May, 1838-(P) 122 23

2 Broughton Papers'BM) *op cit* , Auckland-17 May, 1838 *fol* 264a

3 Governor-General's Minute, 12 May, 1838-(P) 122 23

4 *Ibid*

5. Auckland to Hobhouse, 3 June, 1838 Broughton(BM), *op cit*., *fol* 253a

Auckland's policy both towards the Sikhs and the Afghans, and in particular, his attempt to resuscitate the Saddozai power in Afghanistan with Sikh help, has been subjected to severe strictures [1] His measure of an unnatural Sikh-Afghan rapprochement has often been described as "sufficiantly moderate if not sufficiently unjust" It appeared to Auckland, observes Kaye, to be most expedient to construct an alliance between Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja for the recovery of the dominions of the latter, England was to remain in the background jingling the money bag [2] Colvin cryptically observes "that the beak of appetite of Ranjit Singh was once again tempted by the fruit of conquest and the berries of ravanche" [3] Both these observations are, however, grossly inaccurate In the first place, as it was soon discovered, the Sikh ruler was too shrewd to act as a British stooge in the restoration of the throne of Kabul he had neither the will nor the military resources to embark upon such an enterprise Secondly, it was obvious to the Government of India that it would have to undertake military operations in Afghanistan, but to gain Ranjit Singh's concurrance, the Shah's proposed expedition had to be grafted on the Sikh-Afghan Agreement of 1833 Auckland's intention to employ the Sikhs as an instrument of British policy has, however, been grossly over estimated The idea of active Sikh participation in any military operations in Afghanistan was not only dangerous but extremely distasteful to him, at any rate, he never intended to allow them to move their armies beyond the Khyber 'Yet I must confess, I should lament," he wrote to Hobhouse immediately after the momentous decision, "if Seik force were too conspicuously employed in his restorartion, for, the less the Seiks and the Afghans were mixed up together, I think the better for both the parties" [4]

11 Macnaghten's Mission

The British mission to the Court of Ranjit Singh was headed by Sir William Macnaghten It included Captain Claude Wade, Political Agent at Ludhiana, Captain W G Oshorne, Military Secretary to the Governor General, Captain G Macgregor, Aide de Camp to the

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1 On the subject see generally, Kaye p 318 *sq* Colvin p 108 *ff*, Trotter p 43 *ff* Sykes *loc*

2 *History of War in Afghanistan* I p 18-20

3 *Sir Auckland Colvin*, p 108.

4 Enclosures in letters from Auckland to Hobhouse in the year 1838 Broughton (B M) 36473 Extract No 4., *fol* 37 *a*

Governor-General and Dr Drummond, Surgeon to the Governor-General

Ranjit Singh was still ignorant of the real purpose of Burnes' transactions at Kahul. It was rumoured, that the British Government was prepared to place Dost Muhammad in possession of Peshawar if he promised to have no dealings either with Russia or Persia Burnes had actually led Dost Muhammad to believe that in the event of his acceding to British wishes, the Maharaja might restore Peshawar to the Afghans[1] Though he had been sharply pulled up, for what Auckland described his "too active imprudence,"[2] suspicions still lingered on at Lahore

Macnaghten was, therefore, instructed to explain to the Maharaja, the modified character of Burnes' mission, pointing out to him, that the negotiations with Dost Muhammad had been broken off because the Amir had declined to accept the tender of British good offices for the settlement of Sikh-Afghan dispute, except on terms prejudicial to the Lahore Government The British offer of mediation never countenanced any terms to the Afghans, which were detrimental to the interests of the Sikhs[3] With the Persian siege of Herat, Russian agents were seeking alliances with Kandahar and Kahul. The Indian Government had resolved not to tolerate any Persian or Russian interference in the differences between the Sikh Government and the Kahul ruler.

Two alternative proposals were to be offered to Ranjit Singh The first, envisaged a British recognition of the now defunct treaty of 1833 between the Lahore Government and Shah Shuja. The proposal allowed the advance of Sikh forces to Kahul, and also the occupation of Shikarpur by the Shah with a levy of mercenaries and arms purchased with British money and accompanied by a division of the British army An opportunity would thus be provided to secure for the Maharaja, his customary tributes from the Sindhian Amirs. A general defensive alliance on these terms could be entered into between the English and the Sikhs[4]

The second proposal allowed a free hand to Ranjit Singh to take independent action against Dost Muhammad; but in that event, it

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1 See (PP) XXV 1859, particularly, Burnes to Government, 7 October, 1837 and Government to Burnes 2 December, 1837.

2 Broughton Papers (BM), *op cit*, Auckland 13 February, 1838, *fol* 225b

3. Torrens to Macnaghten, 5 May, 1838(P) 122 2 paras 2 4

4 *Ibid* para 3,

was to be pointed out that the Sikhs might court defeat by the combined armies of Persia and Afghanistan The British Government, in any case, would not allow Shah Shuja to be used as an instrument in the occupation of Kabul by the Sikhs [1]

It is, however, clear that Auckland's Government had no clear perception of the matter It had no clear idea of the manner in which Shah Shuja was to be restored to the throne of Afghanistan The bombastic justification by the Governor-General in his otherwise well drafted manifesto issued in the autumn of 1838, and his report to the Secret Committee on 13 August, 1838, were both the result of an after thought As a matter of fact, Burnes' failure at Kabul had so much shaked Auckland s confidence in the utility of "commercial missions of his predecessor, that the political one now being sent to Lahore carried two vaguely ludicrous proposals That the Maharaja would accept one of them was considered certain, but no one could foretell which one it would be [1] For the last few years, Ranjit Singh had watched the trend of British diplomacy in the south It was now encroaching in the north to achieve something far more substantial than in Sind In 1838, he realised that his relations with the English were merely one sided as the Sikhs had always to yield to political pressure exerted by the Government of India To allay these suspicions, Macnaghten was particularly directed to impress the Maharaja in this ridiculous manner "You may remark that the Governor-General had no appetite for war and conquest, that the boundaries of the East Indian Empire have seemed to *him* amply extensive and that *he* would rather conquer the jungle with the plough plant villages where tigers have possessions, and spread commerce and navigation upon waters which hitherto have been barren, than take an inch of territory from *his* neighbours or sanction the march of armies for the acquisition of kingdoms !" [2]

The British misson arrived at Adinanagar, the summer resort of the Maharaja, on 30 May, 1838 Its movement from Simla and the lavish reception accorded to it *en route* at Rupar, Kotgarh, Hoshiarpur, Mukirian and at the Maharaja's camp is fully covered by Macnaghten's despatches and Osborne s Journal [3] On 31 May, a preliminary meeting took place The Maharaja asked for news of Herat and the Afghan

1 *Ibid* para 5

2 Torrens to Macnaghten *ut supra* para 9

3 Macnaghten to Torrens 17 and 27 May 1838 ISP(I) 17 October 1838 Nos 85 and 90 *The Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh* (Cal 1952) p 21 35

Persian alliance and its connection with Russia and whether a Russian invasion of India was possible [1]

12 Discussions at Adinanagar

On 3 June, Macnaghten delivered the Governor General s letter aod b•gan discussions in the inner chamber of tbe Maharaja s court, where the principal Labore Darbar ministers were also present [2] Besides the British envoy Osborne Wade, Macgregor and Drummand attended the conference [3] Surveying the main events connected with Burnes' mission to Kabul Macnaghten assured the Maharaja that the former s recall by the Governor General was due to the fact, that in exchange for abandoning his connection with Russia and Persia, the Amir had demanded Peshawar, which belonged to the Lahore Government [4] To substantiate the truth of this statement, he offered to produce the correspondence between the Governor General and Dost Mubammad for the inspection of the Maharaja He tben uofolded botb the proposals for the restoration of Shah Shuja with their iotricate details

The Maharaja and his Council agreed at once to accept the pro posals for the restorartion of Shah Shuja, with the observatioo that

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1 Macnaghten to Torrens 31 May 18?8-ISP(I) 17 October 1838 No 99

2 UT iii p 530 *ff* Macnaghten to Torrens ?0 June 1838 ISP(I) 17 October 1838 No 104

3 Macnaghten to Torrens 30 June 1838 *op cit* para 3

4 Macnaghten relates that before the conference began the Maharaja quietly asked him What is the d stance between Pers a and England ? The envoy felt a b t embarrassed hut answered as best as he could (Macnaghten to Torrens 30 June *1838 op cit*) Osborne s *Journal* under date 1 June *1838* re ords the Maharaja s enquiries in the following cryptic manner

How many troops have you got in this country altogether ?

Aboat two hundred thousand

So I have heen told hut you could not bring that number into field at once or at any rate one place ?

Certainly not it is unnecessary Twenty or at the most thirty thousand British troops could march from one end of India ro the other and no power in the country could stop them

You are fine fellows how many Frenchmen can an Engl shman beat ?

At school in England the hoys are taught to consider themselves equal to three Frenchmen

And how many Russ ans ?

The ?rench heat the Russians and we beat the French

If the Russ ans cross the Indus what force could you bring against them ?

Quite enough ro drive them back with Your H ghness as our ally

Wah ! Wah ! so we will

British recognition of the treaty of 1833 would be "like adding sugar to milk" Enquiries were, however, made as to how many British officers would be lent to the Shah, and what forces the British Government would be able to send towards the Indus The alternative proposal, suggesting an independent course of action, evinced no response from Ranjit Singh He seemed quite willing to co-operate in a combined plan of operations, but refused to march on Kabul alone

Early next morning, two of the ministers of the Maharaja conveyed to the envoy, the former's doubts as to the success of the proposals His own troops, he feared, might sustain a reverse when faced with the united forces of the Russians, the Persians and the Afghans The British forces would be too distant to come to his support Macnaghten endeavoured to assure him that the Shah's levies would be trained by British officers The Russian troops, he said, were not likely to be used in Afghanistan The Sikh forces would move cautiously under the advice of British officers, and that, defeat was out of question [1] But the reply failed to convince the Maharaja, who desired active British military participation in the operations In short, in refusing to act alone, Ranjit Singh had a better appreciation of the situation and military difficulties than Macnaghten

13 Sikh Demands

While the members of the British mission were trying to convince the Lahore ministers of the benefits, which the Sikhs would derive from the revival of their ruler's formal alliance with Shah Shuja, on the terms now suggested, the wily Sikh chief, on 8 June, sent to Macnaghten, a paper containing his views in the event of his agreeing to help in the restoration of the Shah [2] He now desired to be paid for his services Among other things, he required a British guarantee of the Shah's conduct after his restoration to the throne, an adequate share in the proposed levy of 2,000 000 rupees from the Sindhian Amirs, and a reward for services in a fixed and perpetual manner in the kingdom of Kabul, *viz*, the cessation of the district of Jalalabad with its dependencies to the Sikhs [3]

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1 *Ibid* 5 June, 1838 ISP(I) 17 October, 1838 No 105

2 *Ibid* 11 June 1838 ISP(I) *op cit* No 111.

3 *Ibid* Annexure paras 1 10 The cession of Jalalabad is demanded in this manner As in the instance of a fine horse who makes a fair bound his rider encourages him by patting his neck with the hands of affection—the horse acquiring courage by the caresses of his rider redoubles his exertions, in this manner

Auckland fully approved of Macnaghten's reply to the Maharaja [1] On the first point, he was told that a clause to this effect would he included in the treaty The second demand was made a matter of reference to the Governor General, and Macnaghten recommended that if conceded, the amount might be set against the expenses of Lahore forces in the contemplated expedition The envoy felt annoyed at the third demand He reported that Ranjit Singh over estimated the value of the services to be rendered by his troops [2] To the Maharaja, he sent a curt answer that the intention of the British Government in the proposed scheme was limited to the advance of Lahore troops merely as a demonstration against Dost Muhammad and not that they should attempt to conquer Kabul [3] On the question of the cession of Jalalabad to the Sikhs, he observed that without giving offence, he had endeavoured to convey to the Maharaja that such a proposition could never be listened to by the British Government [4] On further insistence by the Mabaraja on this point, he had to be more explicit He informed him that such a proposition seemed to be at variance with the objects contemplated by the allies The British Government could never agree to it [5]

Meanwhile, the summer heat had become unbearable at Adinanagar and the Maharaja returned to Lahore, where negotiations were resumed by Mackeson on 20 June At this stage Burnes joined the mission and an attempt was made by the Lahore ministers to secure his mediation over the head of the envoy, in the hope, that the Maharaja might obtain what he desired The Government disapproved of these proceedings and Burnes was directed not to listen to any such overtures [6] In his numerous interviews with the Maharaja and his Council, Mackeson

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from the possession of Jalalabad the Kha'saji will be highly pleased and the whole Sikh nation both far and near will rejoice at the fulfilment of the prophecy of the Satgurus

1 Torrens to Macnaghten 18 June, 1838 ISP(I) 17 October 1838 No 115

2 Macnaghten to Torrens 11 June, 1838 *op cit*

3 *Ibid* 18 June 1838 (Annexure) para 4 *op cit*

4 *Ibid* 11 June 1838 *ut supra*

5 In 1842 however Ellenborough's Government made a porposal for the delivery of Jalalabad to the Sikhs on its evacuation by General Pollock The matter however fell through partly because of Sher Singh's inability to take possession of it and partly because the British Government considered it more conducive to its interests to hand it over to Gulab Singh For details *vide infra* chapter XIII

6 Torrens to Macnaghten 28 June, 1838 ISP(I) 17 October 1838 No 126

showed consumate skill He was told by the ministers that the Maharaja was highly sceptical of the advantages which would be secured to him by the confirmation of his treaty with the exiled Afghan King ,[1] that as a gesture of goodwill, the British Government should agree to the surrender of both Jalalabad and Shikarpur to him [2]

To these proposals neither Mackeson nor the envoy could agree Macnaghten endeavoured to impress upon the Maharaja's mind the benefits he would derive from the treaty and that the British Government sought neither territorial nor monetary advantages out of the entire scheme Ranjit Singh seemed to yield a little, but he pretended, that the Shah had offered him in 1833, an annual tribute of 500,000 rupees as the price of his restoration If he was not allowed to take possession of Jalalabad, at least, he should be permitted to exact this tribute from the Shah after his restoration to Kabul [3] Further, the envoy was informed that Sultan Muhammad Khan, the Peshawar Barakzai, had agreed to put the Lahore forces in possession of Kabul for a sum of 100 000 rupees and 10,000 horse [4] Mackeson shrewdly hinted that although the stipulation for annual tribute would give mercenary character to the treaty, the wishes of the Lahore Government would be conveyed to the Governor General Osborne cryptically observes in his *Journal* for the 19 June : 'The old lion had turned sulky, and refuses to sign the treaty, wishing to stipulate all sorts of concessions which cannot be granted, and thus reference to headquarters is rendered necessary '[5]

14 Tribute or subsidy

The question which had to be answered was whether the Shah's payment to the Sikhs was to be regarded as a tribute or subsidy A compromise was arrived at by Macnaghten with an argument, that the payment could be regarded as a subsidy only if the military aid rendered by the Sikhs was on a reciprocal basis [6] Ranjit Singh was, therefore told that if a Muhammdan (not Sikh) force of not less than 5, 000 strong could be maintained at Peshawar, the Shah could be

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1 Macnaghten to Torrens 20 June 1838 ISP(I) 17O tober 1838 No 124

2 Mackeson s Memorandum (Enclosure in) Macnaghten to Torrens 23 June 1838 ISP(I) 17 October 1838 No 127

3 Macnaghten to Torrens 23 June 1838 *ut supra*

4 *Ibid* para 3

5 *The Court and Camp of Ranjit Sineh* p 55

6 Macnaghten to Torrens, 23 June 1838 *op cit*

persuaded to pay him an annual tribute of 200,000 rupees, for the punctual payment of which, the British Government would hold itself responsible[1] The Maharaja observed that the reciprocity of obligation was ridiculously nominal, and Macnaghten agreed that it was so It was also pointed out to the envoy that to maintain 5,000 troops at such a nominal payment was a hard obligation[2] Macnaghten also realised the unreasonableness of the amount in proportion to the aid to be given to the Shah A suggestion was, therefore, made that the sum of 200,000 rupees annually should be paid by the Shah irrespective of the consideration whether the latter required military aid or not Further, the Shah's requisition for Lahore troops could be subjected to a prior British approval It was realised that such a price for the surrender of Sikh claims on Jalalabad and Shikarpur, was too cheap both for the British Government and the Shah.[3]

In subjecting the revenues of Afghanistan to a perpetual subsidy of 200,000 rupees to be paid annually to the Sikhs, no one thought of Afghan pride Auckland merely considered the proposition as of immediate pecuniary advantage to the Maharaja—highly pleasing to the Sikhs and displeasing to the Afghans[4] Later, however, he reported to the Secret Committee, that it was inconsistent with the dignity of the Shah, but that it could be regarded as an annual subsidy in exchange for Ranjit Singh's aid at any time the Shah might require[5]

The Shah, when informed of it by Macnaghten on 15 July at Ludhiana, observed, that it would be derogatory to his reputation as Amir to pay a tribute to the Sikhs; that it would tarnish the fair name of the British Government along with his own[6] The revenues of Afghanistan, he pointed out, were meagre, the "subsidy" therefore, should be made conditional and proportionate to the occasion when he actually made use of Sikh troops Macnaghten tried to convince him that the "subsidy" was, in fact, "a remuneration for services," and could not be construed as payment of tribute, that the Shah's

1. *Ibid* (Rough draft of the treaty art 14)
2. *Ibid* 26 June 1838 ISP(I) 17 October 1838 No 132
3. *Ibid* 23 June 1838 *op cit*
4. Torrens to Macnaghten 2 July, 1838 ISP(I) 17 October, 1838 No 131
5. Governor General to Secret Committee, 13 August 1838 BISL(I) Vol 23
6. Macnaghetn to Torrens (Enclosure Memo of interview with Shah Shuja) 17 July 1838-ISP(I) 17 October 1838 No 144 'In this world the Shah observed ruefully, 'a good name deserved to be prized that half a loaf with the possession of a good name was better than abundance without it (*ibid* para 10)

honour and prestige could not be involved in the arrangement, and above all, that was the only sensible way of saving Jalalabad and Shikarpur from Ranjit Singh and "the ambition and prejudices of his bigoted people and soldiers" The Shah had no choice in the matter. He murmured about the reduced resources of Kabul, hoped for British support in this respect, and consented "to content himself with what now remained of the disjointed kingdom of Afghanistan"[1]

15 Ex Shah s reactions

The Maharaja signed the treaty on 26 June, 1838 Macnaghten's work at Lahore was completed He was now directed to proceed to Ludhiana to "exhibit" to the ex king the draft of the treaty and discuss with him the measures, which would be founded upon it[2] The Shah's concurrence to the *fait accompli* was taken for granted The mission reached Ludhiana on 15 July and Macnaghten had an interview with the Shah the same evening Osborne's account of the appearance of the Shah is too graphic to be omitted "The envoys seem to have been struck, he observes, "with the majestic appearance of the old pretender, especially with the flowing honours of a black beard descending to his waist, always the most cherished appendage of oriental dignity He had lived for twenty years in undisturbed seclusion, consoling himself for the loss of his kingdom in a domestic circle of six hundred wives, but always 'sighing his soul' towards the mountains and the valleys of Afghanistan, and patiently awaiting his *kismet* or fate, which was to restore him to his throne"[3]

Macnaghten told the Shah that the British Government had decided to restore him to his throne A plan, based on the Sikh-Afghan treaty of 1833, had been concerted with the Maharaja and needed his concurrence Shah Shuja's reactions to the treaty of 1833 were sharp, and he refused to consent to the stipulated surrender of Afghan territory to the Maharaja He exhibited surprise at the mention of Peshawar and Shikarpur in the treaty, and wondered, how the Amirs of Sind would consent to the sum of money required from them. He further failed to understand article 13 of the treaty which pertained to the subsidized troops.[4]

Eventually, he agreed to everything, but not before submitting on 17 July, a paper containing 8 points, on which he desired satisfaction

1 *Ibid* paras 10 13
2 Torrens to Macnaghten, 2 July, 1838 ISP(I) 7 October, 1838 No. 131
3 p 75 *ff*
4 Macnaghten to Torrens, 15 July, 1838 (Enclosure) ISP(I) *op cit*

Briefly, he demanded an assurance of non interference with his authority in Afghanistan, no hinderance in the consolidation and extension of his kingdom to its proper limits—Balkh, Seistan, Baluchistan and the dependencies of Kabul and Kandahar, and the abrogation of the clause requiring monetary payments to Ranjit Singh, which would be construed by his neighbours as a payment of tribute by the Afghans to the Sikhs Finally, he demanded the restitution of Shikarpur to Kabul Macnaghten assured him that with the exception of the last two, his wishes would be scrupulously attended to by the British Government [1]

In making these demands, the old Shah was evidently safeguarding his own prestige in the eyes of his own people The Afghan tribes, he argued, if they found out that he was a mere puppet of the British and no loger a source of power and reward, would soon desert him and return to their homes The Afghans, he said, as a people hated foreign interference of any kind In this estimation of his own people, the Government of India was to find out later, the Shah was correct

16 Sikh gains

The Tripartite treaty of 26 June, 1838 has often been subjected to scathing criticism It has been described as 'morally unjust,' 'politically inexpedient' and 'the first stage in the course of a high handed robbery pursued under pretexts transparently false '[2] In the context of Anglo Sikh relations, it is extremely doubtful to consider that the Indian Government desired to make 'the paralytic Ranjit Singh as the sheet anchor of British policy [3] The Maharaja, undoubtedly, assented to a modification of the Sikh Afghan treaty of 1833 under political pressure, but it is highly questionable whether the Indian Government would have proceeded to restore Shah Shuja without Ranjit Singh s concurrence Auckland fully realised the power of the Sikhs in the Punjab and acting with a judicious sense of guilt in Sind, placated the Maharaja to the fullest limit possible

The proposed levy of 2,000,000 rupees on the Sindhians, out of which 1,500,000 were to be paid to Ranjit Singh, satisfied the Maharaja in the final abandonment of his claim on Shikarpur Auckland defended the imposition of the levy on Sind It was, he said, neither harsh nor unjust "There had been no usurpation more flagrant than that of Shikarpur by Sinde, and it was not unreasonable that we should make

1 *Ibid* 17 July, 1838 ISP(I) 17 October 1838 No 144
2 Trotter, p 59
3 Sykes i p 397

our guarantee to the Amirs conditioned upon some satisfaction given by them to those who assert a claim to the usurped districts "[1]

Notwithstanding his failing health, Ranjit Singh had exhibited extraordinary vigour in the conduct of negotiations With simple Jat commonsense, he had realised the immediate advantages to be gained by agreeing to a proposition, in which his liability was limited He had refused to act alone for the reason, that he had neither any intention nor the means to conquer Kabul He clearly perceived that even if the Indian Government avoided the responsibility, it would ultimately come forward to claim the credit As a measure of solving the problem of the Sikh Afghan dispute, the replacement of the irksome Barakzai at Kabul by the former victim of his high handed ness, the Saddozai weakling, was highly agreeable to him The events following the Shah's restoration, and the calamity of the first Afghan War, has engendered so much anger and excitement against Auckland's policy, that one is liable to overlook as to what political advantages the Sikhs would have acquired, if Ranjit Singh had lived, say for a decade more

In the settlement of the long standing Sikh Afghan dispute, the British Government guaranteed the terms of the treaty It confirmed to the Sikh kingdom in perpetuity, the former Afghan possessions of Kashmir, Attock and Hazara , the territories lying on the either bank of the Indus , Peshawar and the Yusafzai dependencies up to the Khyber , Bannu, Tank, Kalabagh and other dependent Wazir districts , the Derajat and the rich province of Multan The Afghans agreed to consider these territories as forming part of the State of Lahore[1] For relinquishing its claim on Shikarpur, the Lahore Government, under British mediation was to receive a sum of 15 lacs of rupees[3] Finally, both the British and the Sikh Governments would jointly control the foreign relations of Afghanistan[4] For all this, and a further payment of 200,000 rupees annually to it by the Afghans, the Lahore Government was merely required to maintain a Muhammadan auxiliary force of not less than 5,000 men for the Shah's aid after his restorartion, whenever the British Government deemed that aid necessary[5]

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1 Auckland to Hobhouse (Private) 9 February, 1839 Broughton(BM) 26473 *fol* 224b

2 For treaty, see Macnaghten to Torrens 26 June 1838 ISP(I) 17 October 1838 No 132 (Art 1)

3 *Ibid* Art 4 and 16

4 *Ibid* Art 14

5 *Ibid* Art 15

17 Self-gratification

The treaty having been signed, Auckland informed the Secret Committee on 13 August 1838 that he felt gratified at the successful conclusion of negotiations with the State of Lahore "When I resolved upon entering into negotiations with Maharaja Runjeet Singh, based upon the design of restoring Shah Shooja ool Molk," he wrote, "the state of relations with other powers was anything but satisfactory To westward, there was every appearance of an extensive and formidable combination against our Rule It was doubtful whether we should not be forced into a war both with Ava and Nepal In short, in almost every direction, we seemed to be surrounded by undisguised foes and doubtful friends."[1] The British alliance with Ranjit Singh, he further observed, would damp the spirit of disaffection all over India, frustrate the views of their enemies, bring favourable results with Nepal and would arrest the progress of Russian and Persian intrigues The treaty, he added, would give the British Government much greater influence over the affairs of the Punjab Some of the terms appeared objectionable, but those were not likely to endure, for, the Maharaja was weak and dying, and it was improbable that on his death any single individual would succeed to the undisputed and entire possesion of power which the genius had raised up[2]

Justifying the course of action about to be pursued by the Government of India, Auckland observed 'We owe it to our safety to assist the lawful sovereign of Afghanistan in the recovery of his throne The welfare of our possessions in the East requires, that we should in the present crisis of affairs, have a decidedly friendly power on our frontiers, and we should have an ally who is interested in resisting aggression, in place of a chief seeking to identify himself with those whose schemes of aggrandizement and conquest are not to be disguised"[3]

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee 13 August 1838 BISR (I) Vol I No 18 paras 49 59

2 *Ibid* paras 52-53

3 *Ibid* para 54

CHAPTER XI

SIKH ROLE IN THE OPERATIONS OF THE KHYBER, 1838—1842

1 Consequences of the Treaty

We are not concerned with the first Afgan War except in so for as it has a direct bearing on Anglo Sikh affairs The Tripartite Treaty of 1838 between Ranjit Singh, Shah Shuja-ul Mulk and the English had not provided for the presence of large foreign armies in the Punjab, nor had it envisaged the gradual transformation of the State of Lahore into a common highway for the movement of British troops and supplies towards the Khyber As the war developed in Afghanistan, it presented a problem to the Sikh Government with its consequent repercussions on the morale of the army and the mind of the general public The Indian Government did not believe in the restoration of the Shah through Sikh arms, but it kept up that pretence till the treaty was signed Ranjit Singh, on the other hand, had set aside his prejudice against a kind of warfare in which there were no territorial gains for the Sikhs, but, had accepted the limited obligations under the treaty From the outset, Auckland did not commit the folly of entrusting the measure to the Sikhs He believed that if they took part in the operations beyond the Khyber, they would ensure that their own objects were achieved and gladly see those of the British defeated [1]

If, therefore, the Sikhs were willing to help in the Shah's restoration the Indian Government was equally determined not to employ Lahore armies for the destruction of the Chief of Kabul "The faggots are laid," wrote the Shah's friends beyond the Khyber, "it requires but the torch of the British Government to light them" [2] Practical impediments in the way of direct Sikh participation against the Afghans were abundant The foremost was their intense hatred of each other Then there was the British mistrust of the Sikhs as doubtful allies in any military operations, supplemented by the weakness of British military strength on the Sutlej Compared to the Sikh army of over 70 regiments with 700 pieces of artillery, the British had two or three European regiments, scarcely mustering 500 men each [3] It was feared that the

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1 Auckland to Hobhouse (Private) 3 June 1838 Broughton(BM) 36473 *fol* 252b

2 *Ibid* 17 June 1838 *op cit fol* 264a

3 *Ibid* 9 December, 1838 *op cit fol* 363b

Sikhs might take it upon themselves to advance in support of the Shah While Sikh-Afghan enmity appeared irreconcilable, the Indian Government decided that without giving any umbrage to the Maharaja, Shah Shuja must not be allowed to become an instrument of Sikh ambition [1]

Accordingly, Auckland informed the Committee in August that it would be essential for the British Government to give direct and powerful assistance to Shah Shuja's enterprise. The measure, he observed, could not be entrusted to Ranjit Singh without imminent hazard of failure, which would lower British reputation in the eyes of the Afghans [2] While the matter was being considered in London, the Governor-General issued a Declaration on 1 October, 1838 outlining in detail the aims of the British Government in espousing the cause of Shah Shuja.[3]

2 The October Declaration

The October Declaration is a pious apology for earlier British non-intervention in the Sikh-Afghan dispute It is full of platitudes It condemns Dost Muhammad as a usurper and extols the virtues of the Saddozai puppet, especially, his popularity in Afghanistan. But the Sikh part in the restorartion of the Shah is mentioned in a cautious and half-hearted manner Shah Shuja, it announced, would regain his power in Afghanistan by means of his own troops supported by a British army. As a practical measure of policy, it was a sound move, for, the Afghans hated the Sikhs. Later, Wade had to issue a proclamation which avoided all reference to Sikh help as provided for in the tripartite treaty.[4] The effect of this disclaimer was, hower, nullified by Geocral Avitable's proclamation, which applauded Anglo Sikh unity in the combined operations [5]

For obvious reasons, it was decided tbat the main army—called the Army of tbe Indus, under the command of Sir John Keane, should proceed to Kandahar via Shikarpur. Sir William Macnaghteo, who was appointed as Minister and Envoy to Kabul, was to accompany the Shah to Afghanistan [6] The alteration of the route of the Shah's march

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1 *Ibid* 28 June, 1838 *op cit*, *fol* 279a

2 Governor General to Secret Committee 13 August, 1838 BISL(I) Vol 23 No. 18 of 1838

3 IPC(I) 30 January, 1839, C10

4 Wade to Maddock (Enclosure), 5 March 1839 ISP(I) 26 June, 1839 No 102

5 For Avitable's Proclamation *vide* Broughton Papers(BM) 36473 *fol* 467-468

6 Torrens to Wade, 29 December, 1838 ISP(I) 20 March 1839 No 79.

eliminated the danger of collision with the Sikhs, within whose territory, it was considered, that the British Government would not be able to render direct aid with freedom Further, in case of a reverse, the Shah could more easily find asylum among his co religionists in Sind than with the Sikhs in the Punjab [1]

Diversionary to the main operations, a subsidiary force raised by British money and nominally under Shah Shuja's eldest son but really commanded by Wade, was to proceed towards the Khyber through the Punjab [2] The main purpose of this small contigent was to gain adherents to the Shah s cause among the Khyberis and frontier tribes, and then, if possible force its way through the Khyber towards Kabul Several British officials including Lieutenant J D Cunningham, the future historian of the Sikhs accompanied Wade At Ludhiana George Russell Clerk was put in charge of the Agency

3 The Ferozepur Meeting

Early in December 1838 Lord Auckland met Maharaja Ranjit Singh at Ferozepur The Maharaja told the Governor General that the English and the Sikhs were like brothers, the two nations were one, and their armies belonged to each other The Governor General found it difficult to keep on friendly terms both with the Sikhs and the Afghans Yet, a plan for the Sikh army in the ensuing campaign which would avoid collision with the Afghans, was arrived at It was a delicate matter to insist that nothing should be done by a Sikh soldier except with the advice of the British Political Agent On this point the Maharaja's pro fessions appeared rational to the Governor General but he commented 'I shall be little anxious upon them, when his thirty or forty battalions shall be in array' [3] Auckland also suggested to the Sikh Chief, the ne cessity of the return of the British army from Kabul through the Punjab This aroused the suspicions of the Maharaja, and passages from former treaties were read out to the Governor-General, showing that the British Government was bound by them not to interfere on the Sikh side of the Sutlej Auckland listened to their recital with good humour, but the matter was settled amicably, on the condition that the free passage of troops would not form a precedent for the future [4] Auckland also visited the Golden Temple and inspected the fortifications

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1 Wade to Macnaghten 20 June 1838 ISP(I) 17 October 1838 No 77

2 Auckland Broughton Papers *op cit fol* 413b

3 Auckland to Hobhouse, 9 December 1838 Broughton (BM) *op cit fol* 361a

4 *Ibid* 2 January 1839 *op cit fol* 411b

of Govindgarh fort Though the Maharaja's illness during the last days of the Governor Geoeral's visit restricted friendly intercourse, yet the latter left the old man with a strong impression of his sagacity and shrewdness and also of his suspicious habits combind with great firmness of purpose "All that was asked," he wrote, "was cheerfully acquiesced in, aod if well adhered to, it will be of great importaoce"[1]

The Ferozepur Meeting also provided to Lord Auckland first-hand information ahout persons and politics at the Lahore Court Ranjit Singh had assured him, that though many around him talked otherwise, he was determined to rely upon British friendship, which had lasted 30 years Auckland gained the impression that the old man would not last long, and that at his death, there would he a struggle for succession between his two sons—Sher Singh, 'claiming to he his owo son, hut who has been disowned,' and Kharak Siogh, 'the son whom he points out as his heir' Sher Singh, he found an intelligent and a good soldier, popular with the army, hut mistrusted by the Maharaja Kharak Singh, the heir-apparent had the appearance of heing deficient io intellect and had quite an unimpressive persoaality—he had 'nothing to attract or attack!' "It is said, however, that his looks do him an injustice," Auckland eommented, "and his son Nauaihal Singh is elever though dissipated Kharak Singh is the designated heir, and is felt to he so, and I think, in the first instance all political and military strength of the country will he turoed towards him, and particularly so, if he should find himself in possession of the treasure his father has accumulated"[2]

Raja Dhiao Singh, the principal minister of the Maharaja impressed him as a chief of great influence and power "Raja Dhian Singh is io the couotry, the observed of all observers, haodsome in appearaoce, graceful in maooers, though of much reserve, powerful io wealth, territory aod connection, looked upto hy all for ahility, aod charged by all with schemes of high ambition His possessioos are in the hills aod extend from the Sutlej to Cashmere, and north of him, his hrother's territories run upto Ladakh of which he has recently made himself master The Jammu army is subservieot to their masters who pay them He in great measure directs the department of artillery aod his influeoce io all directioos is powerful, and with all this he is said to

1 *Ibid*

2. Auckland—Broughton (BM) 36473 9 December, 1838, *fol* 359 *ff.*

he far from friendly to (wards) the English."[1] The ambitions of the Jammu brothers, continued Auckland, were that they would possess Kashmir and declare themselves independent in the hills. Of the army of Ranjit Singh after his death, he observed: "But it is not easy to say what will become of sixty or seventy regiments of infantry, of 700 pieces of artillery and the crowds of cavalry which are all kept together and in order by the one powerful mind ?"[2]

4 Wade's predicament

Wade's deputation to Peshawar placed upon him the duty of supervising all military operations for the Shah in that direction[3] He was accompanied by the Shah's 30 years' old son, Shahzada Taimur—a gentleman 'educated in too contracted a sphere to have great activites and resource'[4] Early in January 1839, he arrived at Lahore with 4,000 ill-equipped levies, raised by the Shahzada with an initial British grant of 10,000 rupees. The Shahzada's own subsistence allowance, supplemented by *ziafats* or presents of money, was fixed at Rs 500 a month[5] Lord who had preceded the contigent to Peshawar, with the concurrence of the Lahore Darbar to win over the Khyberis, had kept Wade informed of the tribal reactions. On 31 January, he wrote that Dost Muhammad was inciting the tribes to a *Jihad* (religious war) against the English and the Sikhs Sultan Muhammad, the Pehawar Barakzai was also persuading them to eschew the cause of Shah Shuja He suggested that the Khyberis might he induced to renounce their allegiance to Dost Muhammad through "pecuniary advances"[6]

On 15 March the contigent arrived at Chamkani, five miles from Peshawar and the Sikh governor of the province, General Avitable, along with other local officials received the Shahzada and the British Political Agent with due honours[7] At Peshawar Wade found the Afghans and the Khyberis acutely suspicious of the Sikh participation in the Shah's restoration He reported that unless the Sikhs were restrained from any offensive action, the Afghan national feelings would be aroused To the tribal chiefs he had to give an assurance that the Sikhs would not cross their boundary, as according to the

1 *Ibid fol* 363ab
2. *Ibid fol* 363b
3 Torrens to Wade, 29 December 1838 ISP(I) 20 March, 1839 No 79
4 Auckland—Broughton (BM), *op cit fol* 411b
5 Torrens to Wade 31 January, 1839 ISP(I) 24 April, 1839 No 19
6 Wade to Torrens, 6 January, 1839 ISP(1) 26 June, 1839 Nos 82-83, also 19 February 1839-(P) 147 3
7. Wade to Maddock, 15 March, 1839-ISP(I) 2 May, 1839. No 37

treaty, they were not required to do so If they did, it would be resented both by the British Government and the Shah [1]

Wade's task at Pesbawar was quite unenviable He had to please both the Sikbs and the Afghans, and it required an effort to keep at a low ebb their mutual hatred of each other. Sikh Afghan enmity limited his endeavours, and operations in the Pesbawar area had to be conducted with great caution [2]

Lieutenant William Barr, who commanded an artillery detachment at Peshawar, has analysed Wade's predicament in a very objective manner. The Shahzada's contigent, he observes, was composed of a motley crowd of Afghan mercenaries with uncertain loyalties The Shahzada was himself marching against the Afghans supported by foreigners and aided by the Sikhs No one could, therefore, predict what his levies would do in case of a reverse or when they were within the tribal area. There were no doubts of the co-operation of the Sikhs, but their hatred of the Afghan was tenfold greater than their aversion to the British Wade was to march upon Kabul with 2,000 Afghan riff-raff, a handful of British sepoys and Indian regulars, against the numerous Khyberis and Afridis amounting to more than 25,000 [3]

Wade's uncertain attitude towards Lahore officials at Peshawar dampened their enthusiasm Inwardly they chuckled at his slender resources and precarious position Conscious of this, Wade began to grumble against the Lahore Government. The Maharaja, he complained, had delayed in providing the Muslim contigent [4] His increasing infirmities had impaired the vigour of his government and his orders were being flouted by local officials [5] Captain Ferris, proceeding with a detachment towards Peshawar had not been treated with deference by the Sikh officials at Attock, who were guilty of not firing the usual salute when the Shahzada arrived at the fort [6] In short, Wade complained, the attitude of the Labore Government was highly evasive in the fulfilment of its obligations under the treaty He

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1 *Ibid* 3 April, 1839 ISP(I) 3 July, 1839 No 39.

2 Auckland to Hobhouse (Private) 1 April 1839 Broughton (BM) 36473 *fol* 450b *ff*

3 *Journal of a March from Delhi to Peshawar and thence to Cabul etc*, p 3 9 *sq*

4 Wade to Maddock 25 March, 1839 ISP(I) 23 March, 1840 No 38

5 Broughton Papers(BM) Auckland, 1 April 1839, *fol* 450b

6 Wade to Maddock, 25 March, 1839, *op cit*

demaoded tbat a Britisb official sbould be seot immediately to Lahore to speed up matters [1]

5 Profusion of complaints

And yet, considering tbe ultimate policy which the Indian Goverameot had decided to adopt witb regard to the participation of the Sikbs, tbe profusion of these complaints seemed unnecessary From all reports, it was evident that the tribes beyond Peshawar were apprehensive of being subjected to tbe Sikb power, and that, the use of Sikh forees beyond their frontiers would be dangerous [2] For these reasons, Wade grew nervous as a Sikh army commanded by Nauoihal Siogh, the Mabaraja's graodson, advanced to help tbe Shahzada at Peshawar As it approacbed Attoek, Wade demanded that it should not proceed beyond Attock till a Muslim contigeot had arrived at Peshawar [3] Further, Wade made tbe astoundiog demaod oo Avitable, the provineial governor, for 5,000 Muslim auxilaries to he raised at Pesbawar without reference to the Labore Government [4] Great efforts were made by the Lahore Goveromeot to co operate with tbe British Preparations for the conduet of operatioos assigned to it had been set oo foot as early as Oetober 1838 [5] The Mabaraja had ordered Kaowar Kharak Singh, Raja Dhian Siogh and Jamadar Khushhal Singh to join Colonel Wade at Pesbawar [6] Tej Singh had marebed witb his troops and a train of artillery northwards, aod Raja Gulab Singh was under orders to proeeed thitber on arrival from Jammu Fateh ud Dio Khao of Kasur was also directed to join his forees with that of tbe Shahzada "The Maharaja," tbe *Lahore Akhbar* reported, "is seoding his armies to tbe assistance of Colooel Wade, for, the Khyber Afgbans are daily swarming in numbers "[7]

The Lahore Government readily complied with Wade's demand to halt the Sikh army at Attock For tbe alleged misconduct of local officials at Attock towards Ferris, tbe commander of the fort was relieved of his command [8] A Muslim contigent of 6,146 men with sixteen guns and 140 pieces of artillary, commanded by Colonel Sheikh

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1 *Ibid* 2 15 March 1839 (P) 147 38 123 21
2 *Ibid* 31 May, 1839 ISP(I) 1 September 1839 No 46
3 *Ibid* 3 April 1839 ISP(I) 3 July 1839 No 19
4 *Ibid*
5 Wade to Macnaghten (Enclosure from Ranjeet Singh) 3 October 1838 ISP (I) 10 April 1839 No 10
6 *Lahore Akhbar*, 16 March 1839 Broughton(BM) 36473, *fol* 310b
7 *Ibid* 10 March 1839 *op cit fol* 460b
8 Wade to Maddock, 11 April, 1839 (P) 147 64

Bassawan, arrived at Pesbawar on 7 May, in time to join in the celebrations at the news of the fall of Kandahar.[1] Kanwar Naunihal Singh, the Commander of the Sikh army at Attock attended by Raja Gulab Singh and others, had come to Peshawar to offer his co-operation to Wade.[2] The young prince exhibited zeal in the procurement of intelligence and the establishment of communications with Mackeson and Macnaghten The Sikh Government advanced funds, and its officials helped in creating disaffection among the tribes by the despatch of emissaries to incite them against Dost Muhammad[3] Proclamations were issued forbidding Lahore subjects to correspond with the enemy; Lahore officials helped Wade in making plans for the attack on Ali Masjid and reconnoitering the area.[4]

And yet, Wade continued to write with resentment of the delay and evasiveness with which the Maharaja's orders were being acted upon The Indian Government, however, considered his views as highly exaggerated and unreasonable[5] Wade had to restrain himself from accepting too much from the Sikhs, and too little from the Afghans, and his unreadiness to accept Sikh help had created suspicion at Lahore.

6 Clerk's report

Meanwhile, George Russell Clerk, the Officiating Political Agent at Ludhiana, proceeded to Lahore to impress upon the Maharaja the necessity of co-operation under the treaty. Further, he was to arrange the establishment of communications with Keane's army through the Punjab, by the location of a British official at Dera Ismail Khan He was also required to furnish information regarding the general state of affairs in the Punjab[6] The Lahore Government readily complied with all the demands[7] Clerk found the Maharaja feeble and nearly speechless, but full of animation and friendship To the Governor-General, he reported confidentially, that although Ranjit Singh was not as ill as it had been represented, others had begun to rule in his

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1 *Ibid* 13 May, 1839-(P) 142.92

2 *Ibid* 27 April, 1839-ISP(I) 27 July 1839 No 35

3 *Ibid* 13 May, 1839 (P) 147 92.

4 *Ibid* 27 April 1839 *ut supra*

5 *Postscript* to Auckland to Hobhouse, 1 April, 1839- Broughton(BM) 36473 *fol* 4[r]0 *ff*

6 Maddock to Clerk, 8 April 1839 ISP(I) 22 May, 1839 No 8

7. Clerk to Maddock 13 May 1839 (P) 104 86, Auckland—25 May 1839 Broughton(BM) 26474 *fol.* 9b

name and the procedure was likely to effect the efficiency of the Government He speculated upon the possibility of dissensions following immediately after the Maharaja's death The court factions, he said, would side with Kharak Singh the heir presumptive and his ambitious son, Kanwar Naunihal Singh A tussle for power would ensue and Dhian Singh, the Dogra minister of Ranjit Singh, would hold the balance Clerk's general opinion was that the dissensions would not impair Anglo-Sikh relations on Ranjit Singh's death [1]

The efforts of British officials at Peshawar began to bear fruit Lord had been working incessantly on the chiefs of Bajaur and the Khyber Messages of devotion to the Shah's cause had poured in [2] The Popalzai chief Ghulam Muhammad informed Wade that both the Shia and Sunni factions at Kabul would welcome the English and the Shah [3] The Yusafzais had tendered offers of help,[4] the Khyberis and the Mohmunds, the only tribes capable of resisting the Shahzada's advance to Kabul, had been placated by General Avitable,[5] and the Peshawar Barakzais had taken a pledge of loyalty to the Lahore Government [6]

Plans for the seizure of Ali Masjid were interrupted by the alarming rumours that the Shia Hazaras and the chief of Kunduz were preparing to attack the Shahzada s contigent Wade now realised that without the help of the Sikh army detained at Attock, it was impossible to force the Khyber [7] At the same time, he feared their march beyoad the Khyber, and considered them untrustworthy so long as they were commanded by Lahore officers [8]

7 Death of the Maharaja

Matters were further complicated by the death of Ranjit Singh, which took place on 27 June, 1839 Wade feared that the Lahore Government would repudiate its treaty obligations in the chaos which would soon overtake the Punjab, and that the Muhammadan auxiliaries

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1 Clerk s Confidential Report (in French) Broughton(BM) *op cit*, *fol* 3b *sq* Another Confidential Report (dated 27 May, 1839) to Auckland is also referred to on *fol* 55b *op cit*

2 Wade to Torrens 11 and 13 January 1839 (P) 147 12 14

3 *Ibid* (Enclosures) 18 January 1839 ISP(I) 26 June 1839 No 90

4 *Ibid* 29 January 1839 (P) 147 24

5 Wade to Maddock 26 March 1839 ISP(I) 26 June 1839 No 110

6 *Ibid* 5 April 1839 ISP(I) 3 July 1839 No 21A

7 *Ibid* 15 March 1839 (P) 147 51

8 *Ibid* 19 May 1839 (P) 147 97

serving with the Shahzada would desert. Soon afterwards, he took the unwise step of announcing to the Lahore troops that the British Government would guarantee their pay [1] The pronouncement surprised the Lahore officers, it also hurt the pride of Kanwar Naunihal Singh and Raja Gulab Singh, the commanders of the Sikh forces in the Peshawar area, both of whom were also accused by Wade of intriguing with the Khyberis [2]

Nothing, however, happened to disturb the arrangements The Lahore officials showed forbearance in the face of the slanderous attitude of the British Political Agent The Sikh army held in reserve crossed the Indus and assembled at Peshawar. Akbar Khan, Dost Muhammad's impetous son had advanced to Dakka to forestall Taimur's levies from forcing the Khyber As he awaited the approach of the enemy at the entrance to the Pass, the news of the fall of Ghazni reached him. The Khyberis had declared for Shah Shuja, and insurrection in the latter's favour had commenced in the Kohistan district The young Barakzai prince broke up his camp in consternation and retired northwards hastily. Ali Masjid was occupied on 27 July by Taimur's levies supported by Colonel Sheikh Bassawan's Lahore troops [3] The Lahore commnader was mentioned in the despatches, and the Governor-General recognised the gallantry of his troops by the presentation of a sword to him on behalf of the British Government [4]

8 Kharak Singh

The death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh did not bring about any abrupt set back in Anglo-Sikh relations, which had run a smooth course for well over 30 years The incapacity of his successors generated violent feuds and factional strife, but for sometime, the structure of the Sikh State remained intact Kharak Singh, the eldest son of Ranjit Singh who succeeded him, was an unimaginative and irresolute weakling Deficient both in intellect and energy,[5] it was expected that his first impulse would be the conciliation of the British Government [6] The Indian Governor-General lamented sincerely the loss of an old and faithful ally and gave immediate recognition to his successor, doubting, however, the latter's ability to prevent the disintegration of Sikh power. Although no

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1. Maddock to Wade, 1 July, 1839 ISP(I) 7 August 1839 No 11
2. Wade to Maddock (Enclosure from Mackeson) 13 July, 1839 (P) 147 122
3. Wade to Maddock, 27 and 29 July, 1839 ISP(I) 22 January 1840 Nos 26-27
4. Maddock to Wade 12 August, 1839 ISP(I) 22 January, 1840 No 28
5. Auckland to Hobhouse 14 July, 1839 Broughton(BM) 36474, *fol* 150a
6. *Ibid* 2 January, 1839 Broughton(BM) 36473, *fol* 412b

immediate catastrophe was expected, yet Clerk's surmises from Ludhiana had given these impressions. The Government, therefore, did not assume too much, but anxious to preserve unimpaired the existing relations, decided to support Kharak Singh It was hoped that he would he able to maintain his power with the help of Naunihal Singh, his energetic son and Dhian Singh, his ambitious Dogra minister.[1]

Kharak Singh's instantaneous recognition by the British Governmeot saved the kiogdom of Lahore from a contest for succession Sher Singh, the Maharaja's second son, advanced his claims and applied to the Governor-General for advice[2] Though a cheerful and well-bred soldier, Ranjit Singh had disowned him and kept him in the hackgrouod His popularity with the army was dimmed by the stigma of his illegitimacy at the Court. The British considerd him clever and hold, but violently unprincipled and sottish, having the support of no party at Lahore, aod hence, powerless for mischief[3] For these reasons, his overtures were rejected and the British Ageot at Ludhiana dismissed his *vakils*, informing him not to do anything which might put in doubt his allegiance to his sovereign[4]

As soon as Kharak Singh's succession became a settled fact, the existing court factioos became active. None, however, challenged the right of the titular weakling, who leaned too much on the English and on his son, Naunihal Siogh, an impetuous youth of 18, whose violent temper and intriguing ambitions were in sharp contrast with his youthful appearance Naunihal Singh possessed the capabilities of a leader, but inwardly, he detested the minister with whom he had allied himself. He was intolerant of the English, and it was doubtful, whether his impetuous nature would not have led the Sikh State to disaster. Soon, he had to divert his energies to maintain his position in the struggle for power hetween the two rival factions at the Court.

9. Court factions

The most powerful group at Lahore was led by the Dogra rajas of Jammu—Dhian Singh, Gulab Singh and Suchet Singh The Jammu brothers were Hindu-rajputs, and at heart, they despised the Sikhs Dhian Singh had risen from the ranks in Ranjit Singh's army to become

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1 *Ibid* 14 July, 1839, *op cit*, *fol* 106a
2. Clerk to Torrens, 7 July, 1839-ISP(I) 7 August, 1839 No 30
3. Auckland-14 July, 1839—Broughton(BM), *op cit*.
4. Torrens to Clerk, 12 July, 1839-(P) 123 67.

his principal minister [1] He was an able administrator and a calculating politician, though charged with schemes of high ambition Dressed always magnificiently, he 'looked a model of manly beauty and intelligence' A fine specimen of noble hypocrisy, he concealed his flavour for intrigue under flamboyancy, and his ambition under practical shrewdness He was a sly Dogra, who hated the Sikhs and was fearful of the English, but to the old Maharaja he had been genuinely attached, expressing at the death of his master, a violent desire to be cremated alive on the funeral pyre [2] At his death bed, Ranjit Singh had nominated him his weak son's principal adviser

The Dogras were immensely rich in territory and connections Dhian Singh's possessions extended from the Sutlej to Kashmir, and north of him were the territories of his soldier brother raja Gulab Singh, the master of Jammu Gulab Singh had built up a little kingdom in the hills, which he had steadily extended to Ladakh in the north He had also raised a considerable army As a soldier, he was brave, and as a prince, he had no personal vices His dream was to become the master of the Punjab but his hill levies possessed no real strength against the Jat soldiery of Lahore, whose hatred of the Rajput was proverbial Gulab Singh, therefore, did not precipitate action and preferring artifice to combat, bided his time

The third brother, raja Suchet Singh was the ruler of Ramnagar

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1 A very interesting *Memoir on Jammu Rajas* was compiled by Richmond in December 1843 *v de* (EP)PRO 30/12-60 That raja Dhian Singh was the most powerful p rson after the Maharaja himself at the Court— the second person in the great dominions is borne out by the observations of Lord Auckland and his Military Secretary W G Osborne who accompanied the Governor General to the Fero epur Meeting in December 1938 Osborne s earlier estimate of Dhian Singh when he accompanied Macnaghten to Lahore in May 1838 is significant He is about thirty years of age and is very high and by all accounts justly so in his master s confidence He is active clever and intelligent possessed of great influence over the Sikh people and in all possibility will be one and not the lea t powerful or deserving candidate for the throne of the Punjab on Ranjit s decease With enormous wealth and property and a large tract of country which he rules with mildness and justice he presents a s ngular instance of a favourite and a man in power whose talents and virtues are more appreciated than his power and influence are envied Gentle manlike manly and unassuming in manners he is still cold and repulsive to Europeans whom he fears and hates with more than common rancour and again t whom he loses no opportunity of exerting his influence with the Maharaja *Journal*—dated 29th May 1838

2 Wade to Maddock 3 July 1939 ISP(I) 4 December 1839 No 78 79

Neither a soldier nor a statesman, but immensely rich both in treasure and intrigue, he was one of the principal chiefs at the Lahore Darbar

The Jammu faction was opposed at the Court by the Sindhianwala group, a mixture of national chiefs and Sikh priests[1] led by Ajit Singh and Attar Singh, who were related to the ruling family of Lahore They hated the Dogra or any non Sikh predominance in the affairs of the State and based their political opportunism on religious fanaticism and an aversion to foreigners

10 The Army

The balancing factor between the rival factions was the Sikh Army, which Ranjit Singh had bequeathed to his unwarlike son Its strength though not staggering in numbers, was quite formidable From reports compiled later at the N W Frontier Agency,[2] it has been estimated that the Lahore Government had an army of 123,500 men—60 regiments of regular infantry (42,000), Akali fanatics (5,000), irregular levies and garrison troops (45,000), cavalry strength being 31,800 horse, which included 8 regular regiments (4,800), the *Ghorcharas* or matchlock horsemen (12,000), and the Jagirdari horse (15 000) Field artillery and heavy guns amounted to 337 and light artillery to 228 Ranjit Singh had built up this army with consumate skill Part of it was modelled upon European pattern It was the fond child of the military despot, who fed it with most of his revenue resources, which approximated to 32 475,000 rupees[3] While Ranjit Singh was the master of this colossal machine, the new Maharaja had no power to control it

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1 Clerk s Report—Auckland 25 September 1839 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 137b

2 In 1839 the British had no statistical information about the strength and composition of the Sikh army These reports on the Military Resources of the Punjab were compiled by Col Richmond the Agent to the Govetnor General in 1843 44 *vide* ISP(I) 23 March 1844 No 577 21 September 1844 No 143 26 October 1844 No 113 27 April 1844 No 180 181 and 28 December 1844 No 104

In 1844 Lieutenant J D Cunningham Assistant to the Agent drew up an outline sketch of the Military Resources and Political Conditions of the Punjab *vide* ISP(I) 28 March 1845 Nos 55 and 66

3 According to British records the estimated revenue of the State of Lahore comprised of (a) income from tributary states 565 000 rupees (b) land revenue 1 79 85 000 rupees (c) income from religious grants 2 000 000 rupees Jagirs including hill jagirs of Jummu rajas 95 25 000 custom excise and other duties 2 400 000 Total—3 24 75000 rupees Though these figures were compiled in 1844 they are equally applicable to the revenues of the State of Lahore under Ranjit Singh

11 Court politics

To the British, Kharak Singh's rule appeared unpromising The drift of court politics had to be watched with an eye on operations in Afghanistan Both Wade and Mackeson directing operations in the north poured out alarming reports There was, however, no explosion Wade's contigent advanced beyond the Khyber with the assistance of Lahore officials At Calcutta, the general impression continued to be that despite dissensions, peace and the government of the country would be maintained [1]

Kharak Singh' incapacity to rule provided an opportunity to Dhian Singh and prince Nauonhal Singh to assume complete control of the civil administration and the army For a while, it appeared "that there could be no stability or efficiency in any administration in the hands of the prince unassisted by Dhian Singh or in the hands of Dhian Singh unsupported by the prince" [2] It was, however, apparent that the coalition would not last long Naunihal Singh was both ambitious and energetic He was regarded with much popular favour both by the Army and the Court But the unfortunate Maharaja was, from day to day, put in obscurity and in the background Besides, Sher Singh stood aloof unreconciled to the succession He did not take up his residence on his estates on the right side of the Sutlej but tarried on at Lahore in the hope that if confusion arose, he might yet carve out something for himself He busied himself in intrigues at the Court and expressed the conviction that many swords will ere long be leaping from the scabbards to settle the question of succession [3]

12 End of Afghan campaign

On 26 August, 1839, the Governor-General announced to the Maharaja, the termination of the campaign in Afghanistan [4] The Shah had been restored to the *masnad* at Kabul after 30 years' exile, the Barakzai usurper having fled to Bokhara The main objective of the tripartite treaty had been reached, and the Sikhs had played well their minor role in the enterprise The services of the Sikh army under

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee 15 July 1839 BISL(I) Vol 9 No 20 para 4

2 Auckland to Hobhouse (Private) 25 September 1839 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 138b

3 *Ibid fol* 139a

4 Maddock to Clerk (Enclosure to Kharak Singh) 26 August 1839 ISP(I) 9 October, 1839 No 9

Naunihal Singh were applauded. The prince, wrote the Governor-General, knows how to combine the discretion of a statesman with the best virtues of a soldier [1]

The first concern of the Indian Government was the return of Keane's Army of the Indus across the Punjab. As the Shah was unable to maintain his position at Kabul without the presence of a British force, a part of Keane's forces had to be left in Afghanistan The decision created problems of keeping open communications through Peshawar to Kabul and carrying to the force stationed there, convoys of military stores and supplies through the heart of the Punjab Clerk was, therefore, sent to Lahore to arrange matters satisfactorily. Whether the Darbar accepted or not, he was authorised to communicate with Sir John Keane direct to march towards Peshawar.[2]

At Lahore Clerk found every one averse to the British proposals, he could only overcome the Darbar's prejudice by entering into a positive assurance that after the return of the army then in Afghanistan, a British force would never cross the Punjab [3] The declaration appeared quite unnecessary, and Clerk was directed to modify it The Lahore Government was told that while it was not the intention of the British Government to acquire a perpetual right of passage through Lahore territories, it could, with the consent of the Darbar use the Punjab for military purposes [4] The sardars, however, looked at the proposal with some uneasiness, apprehending that the presence of foreign troops would lead to disturbances and impair their national independence [5] Ultimately, the passage was conceded through the indirect route of Dera Ismail Khan without touching Lahore.

13 Clerk's second report

During his visit, Clerk observed the state of affairs at the Lahore Darbar He reported that Naunihal Singh-Dhian Singh coalition made no progress The Maharaja had found a new favourite in his brother in-law, Chet Singh, whom he desired to appoint as his principal minister The main opposition to the British demand for passage of troops had come from Chet Singh and the Sindhianwala group. Various court

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1 Governor General to Kharak Singh 20 August 1839 (EP) PRO 30/12 II (1).

2 Maddock to Clerk 20 August 1839 (EP) PRO 30/12 II (1)

3 Clerk to Kharak Singh 9 September 1839 (EP) PRO, *op cit*

4 Maddock to Clerk, 14 October, 1839 ISP(I) 20 April 1840 No 89

5 Auckland to Hobhouse 25 September 1839 Broughton(BM) 36474 *fol* 137b

factions consulted Clerk, and he advised them to remonstrate with the Maharaja to get rid of the favourites "I proved to them," Clerk wrote confidentially to Auckland, "that they might be effectively removed "[1] Thus, unwittingly Clerk gave encouragement to rival parties against each other Soon Chet Singh was murdered in cold blood by the minister with the connivance of the prince The Indian Government showed its horror at the outrage[2] Dhian Singh and Naunihal Singh began to act in apparent unison and the unfortunate Maharaja was placed in virtual confinement[3]

But sooner than expected, the prince and the minister began to drift apart Naunihal Singh's attempt to deprive Gulab Singh of several districts between the Jehlum and the Indus, led Dhian Singh to break with the prince and make a determined effort to restore Kharak Singh's authority The struggle for power led to the belief in the Court that Dhian Singh might seize the government with the help of European officers[4] But the prince got the upper hand, and with the active support of the Sindhianwala faction and the army, forced the minister to secede to the hills in disgrace[5]

14 Wade s return

When in November 1839 Wade resumed charge at Ludhiana, sharp differences with the Lahore Darbar had crystallized Establishment of political relations with Afghanistan under the treaty necessitated the adjustment of boundaries between Lahore and Kabul The Sikh Government was required to maintain a contigent of troops at Peshawar[6] Keane's troops had returned to Ferozepur without any untoward incident, and though the General's party had been extremely well received at Lahore, the Darbar had not concealed its dislike of the passage of troops through its territories[7] The contending parties at the Court had found a rallying point in resistance to any further demands for passage of troops, convoys and supplies across the Punjab

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1 Auckland to Hobhouse 25 September and 15 October 1839 Broughton (BM) 36474 *fol* 137b 139b and 163b *Lahore Akhbar* 9 October 1839 Broughton *op cit fol* 166a

2 Maddock to Wade 30 October 1839 (P) 124 8

3 Wade to Maddock 1 January 1840 (P) 141 1

4 Auckland—21 December 1839 *op cit fol* 193b

5 Ibid 15 August 1840 *fol* 344b 18 September 1840 *fol* 352a

6 Maddock to Wade 30 October 1839 (P) 124 8

7 Auckland to Hobhouse 23 January 1840 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 209a

It was contended that no such obligations were binding on the Darbar by treaty, that the British Government was taking everything for granted and a precedent was being made of the previous concession for the establishment of a right of passage by armed forces through the Punjab[1] Unnoticed by the Sikh Government, British political officers had taken up stations at convenient points in the kingdom—at Peshawar, Rawalpindi and Dera Ismail Khan. Their continued presence proved highly irksome to local authorities Supply depots were to be established from Sbikarpur to Peshawar, and it was proposed to station a commissariat official at Jehlum The Darbar was further told of the intention of the Government to dispatch a convoy to Kabul, and the possibility of the recurrence of such convoys as long as British troops remained in Afghanistan[2]

The Darbar resented British pressure There was angry language against the Political Agent (Wade) and Faqir Aziz-ud-Din, the old minister made the insinuation "this may be Alexander Burnes and Dost Muhammad again" Unconcealed taunts were made at the British position in Afghanistan A suggestion was made that it would be less disturbing to the Sikh population if the British troops crossed the Punjab disguised as camel-drivers[3] All this gave offence to the British officials "The Sikhs," observed the Governor General, "are a swaggering and restive nation and proud of their military strength and there is not an officer in our army who does not avow an appetite for a Sikh war"[4]

15 Wade's recall

Discussions concerning the passage of troops, convoys, supplies and stores dragged on for some time Suddenly, the Lahore Government demanded that Wade, the Ludhiana Political Agent, be replaced by an officer who "would speak gently" and conduct the relations between the two states more amicably[5] For some time past, that British functionary had given deep rooted offence to the principal Sikh chiefs His overbearing behaviour and numerous complaints against Naunihal Singh and Dhian Singh had rendered him obnoxious to both of them He had

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1 Wade to Maddock, 10 March 1840 (P) 143 52.

2 Maddock to Wade 30 October 6 December, 1839 (P) 124 8, 22 Wade to Maddock 9 December 1839 (P) 147 173

3 Auckland to Hobhouse, 23 January, 1840 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 208a

4 *Ibid fol* 209a

5 *Ibid* 16 February 1840 Broughton(BM) 36474 *fol* 231b

charged the prince with intrigues against the British Government, had openly accused him of complicity in Chet Singh's assassination and of having usurped the power of the Government[1] On Sir John Keane's visit to Lahore, Wade had accused him of attempting to prevent an interview between the British General and the Maharaja The prince was reported consulting his astrologers to get rid of him[2] He had poisoned Kharak Singh's mind against Wade, with the result that the former refused to see him when he arrived at Lahore on his way from Kabul to Ludhiana

A further incident brought about a complete alienation of the Darbar towards the Political Agent In December 1839, the Lahore Government decided to recall its Ludhiana Agent Wade challenged the authenticity of the order, accused Naunihal Singh of forgery and prevented Govind Das, the Lahore Agent from leaving Ludhiana[3] The Darbar resented Wade's action, which had given offence to prince Naunihal Singh and refused to recognise Wade's agency[4] A Sikh mission conveyed to Auckland the sentiments of the Lahore Government, refusing to deal with Wade, and he had to concede to the Darbar's request The Governor General believed that Wade ought to have been more strictly neutral and that, his qualifications were sometimes impaired by an offensive tendency to petulance[5] Wade had known the Punjab for over 17 years and his influence with Ranjit Singh had been great, but since the death of the old man, he had not been on good terms with those in power at Lahore It had become clear that without a change at Ludhiana, a frank and cordial understanding with Lahore could not be established Many important interests, particularly, communications with British troops in Kabul, were at stake[6] On 1 April, 1840, Wade was replaced by George Russell Clerk, who was not only able but also more active and conciliatory

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1 Wade to Maddock 11 December 1839 (P) 147 176
2 *Ibid.* 19 December 1839 ISP(I) 19 February 1840 No 18
3 *Ibid* 16 December 1839 ISP(I) 19 February 1840 Nos 25 27
4 Auckland to Hobbouse 23 January 1840 *op cit fol* 208a
5 Auckland to Hobbouse 23 January 1840 *op cit fol* 208ab
6 *Ibid* 16 February 1840 *op cit fol* 231b

Chapter XII

AN INTERVAL OF TURMOIL, 1840—1842

1 Differences come to surface

The new Political Agent at the N W Frontier Agency possessed considerable knowledge of Punjab affairs, he also had too much frankness in his nature to be made easily suspicious [1] For a while, he brought fresh air to the vicious atmosphere created by his predecessor The court factions felt jubilant at Wade's removal and they seemed too anxious to co-operate with Clerk Naunihal Singh had, perhaps, exhibited too much sensitiveness, but his vigilance and determination seems to have aroused a spirit of national independence at the Darbar He had improved his position both at the Court and with the army the Wade affair further increased his prestige and power Dhian Singh was still in the hills and the administration of the country did not suffer [2]

So far, the guiding principles in British political relations with the State of Lahore had been to ensure the unity of the Sikhs, and avoidance of all interference in the internal affairs of the Punjab On the part of the Sikhs, notwithstanding, the disunity at the Darbar, the value of British friendship was realised The national feeling was probably opposed to the existing settlement in Afghanistan, by which that country was placed under British control and the progress of Sikh aggrandizement had been arrested [3] Clerk was, therefore, instructed to impress upon the Darbar the necessity of moderation in its internal and external policy

But in the summer of 1840, the accumulated differences between the two states again came to surface There seemed to be a strong disposition with many of the British officials to quarrel with the Sikhs,[4] and grounds for provocation were not wanting Since late 1839, the Sikhs at Peshawar had shown a tendency to extend their influence beyond their borders,[5] and in May 1840, the Darbar had taken steps to occupy

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1 *Ibid* 11 12 May 1840 *op cit fol* 285a
2 Auckland 23 May, 1840, *op cit fol* 304
3 Government to Clerk, 4 May, 1840-(EP) PRO 30/12 II (1)
4 Auckland to Hobhouse 11-12 May *op cit*, *fol* 284a
5 Maddock to Clerk, 2 September, 1839 ISP(I) 20 November 1839 No. 43

tbe two frontier territories of Swat and Buner[1] Clerk attributed the Sikh claim to these territories to a discrepancy in the English and Persian versions of the treaty, but tbe Indian Government considered it a positively illegal right, aimed at extending Sikh frontiers in the direction of Afghanistan[2] From Kabul, Macnaghten demanded the removal of the anti Afghan Peshawar governor, General Avitable, who had been coercing the Khyberis[3] Further, no Muhammadan auxiliary force was being maintained at Peshawar The Darbar had received a secret agent from Nepal, and the Gurkba chieftain Matabar Singh bad paid a clandestine visit to Lnhore[4] The passage of troops and convoys was being made a matter of serious difficulty[5]

Added to these, was the conduct of the Pesbawnr Barakzais, Sultan Muhammad Khan nnd Pir Muhammad Khan, within wbose extensive possessions on the Afghan borders, the Ghilzai chiefs—rebel subjects of Kabul, had found refuge Macnaghten made strong remonstrations and demanded that the Ghilzai rebels nt Kohat he surrendered to Kabul and the Barakzai tributaries of the Lahore Government be not only removed to a distance from the frontier, hut their jagirs be also confiscated[6] The Lahore nuthorities, in nctual fnct, had regarded the malpractices of their dependents with benign complacency

These demands were pressed by Clerk on tbe Darbar in n spirit of friendliness, notwithstanding, charges of dilatoriness levied against h m hy Macnaghten[7] The state of nffairs in Afghanistan mnde it necessary to send reinforcements immediately through the Punjab,[8] nnd a British brigade began to be assembled on the Sutlej[9] Clerk had, therefore, to use considerable tact in demanding concessions Macna ghten's protestations grew louder and annoyed bis superiors at Calcutta "But in the meantime, commented Auckland, 'spirits are beginning to

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1 Maddock to Clerk 4 May 1840 (EP) PRO 30/12 II (1)

2 *Ibid* 17 August 1840 ISP(I) same date No 103

3 *Ibid* 8 June 1840 ISP(I) same date No 92

4 *Ibid* 4 May 1840 (EP) PRO 30/12 II (1) para 7

5 *Ibid* para 8

6 Maddock to Wade 2 Mach 1840 (En losures) ISP(I) same date No 70 Clerk to Maddock 27 July 1840 (Enclosures from Macnaghten of 27 and 29 June) ISP(I) same date No 79

7 Macnaghten s despatch of 17 June 1839 ISP(I) 19 July 1840

8 Maddock to Clerk (Enclosure from Macnaghten) 1 October, 1840-ISP(I) 5 October 1840 No 76

9 *Ibid* No 77

be heated and the Sikhs are pronounced to be our enemies, and our friends at Cabul, would scarcely be satisfied without the march of an army "[1]

The Sikh Government gave a tardy satisfaction in the matter of its dependent Barakzais, it removed them from Peshawar and confiscated their jagirs, but honoured them with *khil'ats* on their arrival at Lahore[2] General Avitable was prohibited from making reprisals upon Afghan subjects[3] While the settlement of Sikh-Afghan frontiers was left open to future arbitration, the Lahore Government also agreed not to occupy Swat and Buner.

2 Macnaghten's accusations

Agreement on these matters had been reached without any trouble, but Macnaghten now charged the Darbar with intriguing with Shah Shuja's enemies A plot had been unearthed disclosing that the Barakzai brothers were in league with Dost Muhammad and the Wali of Kulum[4] The intercepted correspondence showed that prince Naunihal Singh and his advisers, if not directly involved in the transaction, had at least, connived at it Particular acts of hostility alleged to have been committed by the Lahore dependents were cited, and Macnaghten pronounced them as agents of intrigue, making use of the Sikh name in aid of their hostile schemes[5]

Clerk treated these accusations as groundless,[6] and refused to discuss them until the Envoy at Kabul could produce positive proof of the complicity of the Sikh Darbar[7] The Government of India also refused to brand the Sikhs as totally disloyal to its interests,[8] yet, advantage was taken of the accusations to browbeat the Darbar into acquiescing in the British demand for the march of the Brigade[9]

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1 Auckland—Broughton(BM) *op cit*, *fol* 285a

2 Clerk to Maddock, 20 and 23 August, 1840-ISP(I) 7 September, 1840 Nos. 58 and 82

3. *Ibid* 25 August 1840 *op cit* No 83

4 Maddock to Clerk, 18 July, 1840- ISP(I) 3 August, 1840 No 97 1 October 1840 (Enclosures from Macnaghten) *op cit*, 5 October, 1840 No 76

5 *Ibid*

6 Clerk to Maddock, 29 September, 1840 ISP(I) 19 October, 1840 No 87

7 *Ibid* 1 November 1840- ISP(I) 23 November, 1840 No 65

8 Auckland to Hobhouse 20 November 1840- Broughton (BM) 36474 *fol* 374b

9 Maddock to Clerk, 12 October 1840-ISP(I) same date No 92, also Auckland—18 19 October, 1840- Broughton(BM), *op cit*, *fol*. 363a.

These allegations against the Lahore Darbar created sharp difference of opinion between the Agent on the Sutlej and the Envoy at Kabul Clerk and Macnaghten began to disagree and their communications exhibited undue heat and acrimony[1] The Supreme Government regretted it, and considered them both in the wrong It was satisfied with the Darbar's conciliatory attitude The Barakzais and every one connected with them had been removed from the frontier and their estates confiscated[2] Shelton's Brigade had been allowed to proceed towards Peshawar. The intercepted letter, alleged to have been written by prince Naunihal Singh, had proved a frogery,[3] and there was no evidence of a systematic and deliberate intention of the Darbar to play false and intrigue with the enemies of the Shah, as alleged by Macnaghten The grounds for remonstration, much less, the accusation of the Darbar, did not exist

But if the Darbar had conceded all the British demands, Clerk noticed a general feeling of discontent among the Sikhs and the rise of a national spirit in the *Khalsa* "It has become a *jeu de mots* among the imaginative Sikhs," he confided to Lord Auckland, "that they are now so hemmed in (that) they can neither go to Shikarpur nor to their *Shikargah* (hunting ground) meaning Afghanistan"[4]

3 Politics at Lahore

Soon after, Dhian Singh returned to Lahore from the obscurity of the hills At the Court, politics were extremely confused Chet Singh's murder, for which both the prince and the minister were responsible, had introduced a policy of personal violence in settling political differences Dhian Singh's return did not stabilize the unnatural coalition and the administration tended to deteriorate The prince and the minister began to pull in different directions , Kharak Singh's health was failing, and his son kept him a virtual prisoner, allying himself with the Sindhianwala faction to destory the Dogra minister

The Jammu brothers had silently increased their power Gulab Singh hoped to seize the hilly country between the Beas and the Indus, including Kashmir and Hazara, while his brother aimed at subverting the Sikh rule by diplomacy In July 1840, Gulab Singh led his armies

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1 *Ibid* 29 October 1840 ISP(I) 23 November 1840 No 63
2 Clerk to Maddock 28 October 1840- ISP(I) 16 November 1840 No 63
3 *Ibid* 29 October, 1840 ISP(I) 23 November 1840 No 63
4 Clerk to Auckland (Private) 23 May, 1840—Broughton(BM), *fol* 304

to subjugate Iskardo He invested the fort of Jeswareh and carted away state property from the Mianawar district to Jammu In the Darbar, he was openly accused of theft, though the minister remonstrated with the Maharaja not to abuse or degrade his brother[1] The Jammu rajas, it was felt by the Sindhianwala clique, could sway the army and the Bhais suggested to the Maharaja, that he should dismiss all garrisons and replace them by soldiers of his own raising[2]

Prince Naunihal Singh now decided to destroy Gulab Singh Whether he and his Sindhianwala supporters had the means to accomplish it, was doubtful But a large force was designedly sent to the hills, apparently to realise the arrears of tribute from petty hill chiefs, but aiming in reality, to surround Jammu[3] Dhian Singh was in disgrace, he merely sulked and desired to repair to the hills again, but stayed on, in the hope, that the prince would soon get into trouble with the English for being in league with Dost Muhammad[4] The British suspected him of being ambitious and playing an underhand game[5] While the Jammu brothers seemed to have lost power at Lahore, the Sikh commander, Ventura was suspected of playing a game of ambition in the hills[6] A mild flutter was created by the arrival at Lahore of *kharitas* from Nepal, but the British Agent sensed correctly the aversion of the Lahore authorities to any Gurkha proposals against the English[7]

As the impending clash between the two rival factions became certain, politics at Lahore became uncertain "The whole machine," observed the Governor General sarcastically, "would soon fall to pieces if we give it time, but at the present, it seems possible, that we shall not be able to give it time"[8]

4 Death of Kharak Singh

But the rule of Kharak Singh and the ambition of Naunihal Singh

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1 *Lahore Akhbar* 20 July 1840 (Selections in the National Archives of India) Amritsar Patiala 1952

2 *Ibid*

3 *Abstracts of Lahore Intelligence* ISP(I) 6 12 and 15 September 1840 Nos 75 76 and 78

4 Maddock to Clerk, 1 October, 1840 ISP(I) 5 October, 1840 No 76

5 Auckland to Hobhouse 20 November 1840 Broughton(BM) *op cit*, *fol* 372a 375b

6 Clerk to Maddock, 25 August 1840 ISP(I) 7 September 1840 No 84

7 *Ibid* 10 October 1840 ISP(I) 19 October 1840 No 166

8 Broughton(BM) 36474 *fol* 352a

were cut short suddenly, when on 3 November, the Maharaja died and the prince, while returning from the funeral obsequies of his father two days later, received fatal injuries from the fall of a covered gateway.[1] No one could say whether it was a mere accident or the Dogra minister had planned the end of the prince, but it was suspected, that Naunihal Singh was still alive when extricated from the debris, and brutally done to death, soon after, in the palace at Dhian Singh's orders

Thus, either by accident or by wilful plot of the Dogra minister, was extinguished the youthful career of the favourite and resourceful grandson of Ranjit Singh Born in 1821, Naunihal Singh had shown promise from his childhood, and Ranjit Singh had drilled him in the military traditions of his ancestors by sending him in command of campaigns towards Sind and on the Afghan borders The rigour of military life had toughened the energetic and impetuous youth, and at the age of 18 he had become a veteran of many an expedition At the Court, he was liked both by the army and the sardars, and many regarded him as a likely successor to Ranjit Singh His fatal mistake was to coalesce with the Dogra rajas, whose main ambition was to destroy him and his Sindhianwala supporters The murder of Chet Singh was directly attributable to him and so was the removal of Wade from Ludhiana His virtual confinement of Kharak Singh and assumption of power was, perhaps, an unfilial act, yet without it, it is certain that the Jammu rajas would have gained ascendency over the imbecile mind of the Maharaja, and also over the Sikh State

5 The triumvirate

Clerk was immediately instructed to convey to the Darbar the sympathies of the British Government on the death of the sovereign and the son[2] Auckland lamented genuinely the passing away of the grandfather, the father and the son, whom he had seen in the pride of power and expectation two years ago at Lahore He wrote to his Agent to support Sher Singh, if he could establish himself[3] But Sher Singh, whose doubtful paternity stood in his way, found that his elevation to the throne was unpalatable to Naunihal Singh's faction, and that he had neither the support of the court nor the army In the meantime, Mai Chand Kaur, the mother of Naunihal Singh with

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1 Clerk to Maddock 6 7 November 1840 ISP(I) 23 November 1840 Nos 71 75

2 Maddock to Clerk 18 November 1840 ISP(1) 23 November 1840 No 77

3 Auckland to Hobhouse 20 November, 1840 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 271b

the support of the Sindhianwala faction, had assumed the powers of regent When on 8 Novermber, Sher Singh arrived at Lahore, the Bhais confronted him with the superior claims of Kharak Singh s widow, and compelled him to share power with her nominally[1] Dhian Singh, who was inclined to supported 'the *zenana* govern ment' in the hope that his son Hira Singh would he adopted hy Chand Kaur, found the idea extremely odious to the court nohility He declared for Sher Singh, but awaited the arrival of his hrother Gulab Singh, whom he had summoned from Jammu for giving support to Chand Kaur and her party Sher Singh hesitated, hut on Dhian Singh s advice accepted the Bhais' offer, and ultimately, to reconcile the rival groups, an arrangement was arrived at hetween them—Sher Singh hecame the Maharaja, Chand Kaur the regent and Dhian Singh a minister It was announced that the decision had been adopted by the whole of the *Khalsa*[2]

The triumvirate governmcnt was doomed to failure Chand Kaur, who had the support of the Sindhianwala chiefs advanced extravagant claims She hinted at the illegitimacy of Sher Singh, declaring that Naunihal Singh's widow was pregnant, and that her own right to the guardianship of the unhorn legal claiment to Ranjit Singh's throne was firmly established She was ambitious and lacked neither courage nor cunning "Why should I not do as Queen Victoria does in England?' she asked[3] She declared that she would come out of the *zenana*, wear a turhan or ride an elephant as a Sardar and receive the English "Sahihs" as did Begum Samru[4]

The Government of India looked upon these political arrangements with unconcealed cynicism and anxiety because of the state of affairs in Afghanistan It did not acknowledge the regency of Chand Kaur nor her pretensions to sovereignty, and treated the *de facto* arrangements as highly unsatisfactory

6 Clerk s third report

A storm seemed to he brewing at Lahore Clerk looked upon

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1 Clerk—8 November 1840 ISP(I) 23 November 1840 No 79

2 *Ibid* 11 14 and 17 November 1840 ISP(I) 23 November 7 December 1840 Nos 81 115 and 117

3 Auckland to Hobbouse 5 December, 1840 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 391b

4 Clerk to Governor-General (Private) 7 December, 1840 Broughton(BM) *op cit*, *fol* 391b

these events as favourable to British interests[1] The country, he reported, was appoaching a general condition of anarchy[2] The window of Kharak Singh was ambitious of power, and through Bhai Ram Singh—the most influential chief of the "pure Sikh party" and the Sindhianwala chiefs who represented Ranjit Singh's family, began to gather strong adherents Sher Singh, on the other hand, though shrewd and of popular manners, lacked political courage and had little principles[3] He clung to Dhian Singh and secretly sought the support of the British Government "While he did not write to me," Auckland reported privately to Hobhouse," at my suggestion or perhaps without it," he would write away half of the Punjab to the British Government to obtain interference in his favour "[4] Clerk encouraged Sher Singh, nodding significantly, at the same time, to the Jammu rajas' desire for secession from the State of Lahore[5] The Indian Government, however, was willing to acknowledge Sher Singb as tbe rightful head of the State , it forbade its Agent to encourage, in any way, the Jammu rajas and let Sher Singh fight bis battles alone[6]

7 Dhian Singh s duplicity

Amidst the impending clash between the rival groups, Dhian Singh preserved bis character for coolness, courage and ability by sitting on the fence Though apparently on the side of Sher Singh, he kept all the strings of the government in his own hands, and waited for an opportunity to assert his independence in the hills and secure Kashmir for himself.[7] Clerk reported that Dbian Singh was most dangerous he still controlled the Army, while to create confusion, his brother Gulab Singh was supporting Mai Chand Kaur and the Sindhianwala faction ' Sher Singh's character," wrote Auckland on 7 December, "few would trust He is in fear for life and is seeking for himself and his minister the support of the British Government "[8]

Matters having reached a pitch of uncertainty, the administration

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1 Auckland to Hobhouse, *op cit fol* 372b

2 See Clerk s despatches particularly of 5 December 1840 ISP(I) 21 December 1840 No 105 14 December *op cit* No 104 21 December 1840 ISP(I) 11 January 1841 No 63

3 Auckland—20 November, 1840 Broughton(BM) op cit *fol* 372b

4 Clerk s Report and Auckland—7 December 1840 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 419b-423a

5 Clerk 9 January 1841 ISP(I) 25 January 1841 No 100

6 Maddock to Clerk 28 December 1840 ISP(I) same date No 105

7 Auckland to Hobhouse 5 December 1840–Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 397a

8 *Ibid* 22 December, 1840 *op cit*, *fol* 413

of the country came to a standstill Suddenly, Dhian Singh and his brother Suchet Singh declared their determination to leave Lahore The Darbar seemed deserted, and the public business began to be neglected On 2 January, Clerk gave an account of the political situation at Lahore 'The Maee said if the Raja went at such a time as this when Dost Muhammad was coming across and the British convoys marching to Peshawar, she would depart herself to Fattehghar Bhaee Ram Singh said that he would go to his native place near Saharanpore Sardar Utter Singh said that he would return to the Ganges And Fakeer Azeesooddeen begged them for God's sake to talk like reasonable beings In the end Dhean Singh promised to remain a little longer"[1]

8 Sher Singh

Being despaired of any support at the Court, Sher Singh turned towards the Army From the British, he had received a vague assurance of his eventual recognition as a sovereign Only Dhian Singh stood by his side, and with his help, he won over the loyalty of a few divisions On 14 January, he appeared at Lahore[2] The Jammu brothers were loath to see the army swayed in this fashion, as it tended to jeopardise their influence at the Court[3] But the Army had taken the matters in hand, and proclaimed Sher Singh as the Maharaja and appointed Dhian Singh as minister The self styled regent was pensioned off, and her Sindhianwala supporters fled across to British territory[4]

Sher Singh, the new sovereign of the Punjab, was neither a soldier nor a diplomat A man of intemperate habits and a violent temper, the stigma of illegitimacy sapped his will to act with vigour and resolution He had no friend at the Court, though Dhian Singh apparently stood for him yet the combination was not wanting in seeds of dissolution Sher Singh suspected him of ambitious and dangerous views and also of underhand dealings[5] On the other hand, though the principal minister of the State of Lahore, Dhian Singh was afraid of any stable government in the Punjab averse to Dogra interests He welcomed internal distraction The army was nominally under his influence and so was the new Maharaja To the Army, he reported the supposed evil

1 Clerk's Report—Auckland 2 January 1841 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 455b

2. Clerk—17 January 1841 ISP(I) February 1841 No 63

3 *Ibid* 18 21 23 January 1841 *op cit* Nos 67 68 and 71

4 *Ibid* 25 January 1841 ISP(I) 8 February 1841 No 87

5 Auckland—20 November 1840 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 271b

designs of the British towards the Punjab, and also the fact, that Mai Chand Kaur had offered to share half of the Punjab with them if they would set her up as independent sovereign[1] He also fanned the prevalent ominous rumours arising out of the Sindhianwala chiefs' visit to Calcutta But the Army refused to be swayed thus its first aim was to get rid of the Dogra rajas, and then it could clash with the British Government[2] Sher Singh was also afraid of the revival of the schemes of aggrandizement of the Jammu family, which appeared to be the main cause of the instability of the new Government[3] Soon afterwards, he wrote to the British Agent that a plot hatched up by Dhian Singh to kill him, was in the offing[4]

9 Army becomes supreme

Although Sher Singh's accession was unattended by any acts of violence, the Army which had enthroned him, had also become his master. It began to wreak vengeance on those whom it considered traitors to the *Khalsa* It plundered the houses of several chiefs, dismissed foreigners from State service, and declared its determination to punish those, who sought foreign interference[5] The Maharaja and the minister had no power over it 8,000,000 rupees were distributed as arrears of pay and bounties, but the soldiery, for a while, only thought of pillage, and of vengeance against obnoxious officers Akalis and evil characters collected around the capital, and lawlessness seemed to threaten the plains and the roads throughout the Punjab[6]

The British Agent on the Sutlej watched with concern, this transformation of the Army into an organised political power, controlling its ruler Sher Singh desperately applied for British aid, offering in return, the Lahore territory on the north of the Sutlej and 4,000,000 rupees[7]

10 Clerk's fourth report

On 4 February, 1841 Clerk wrote to the Governor-General in

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1 Clerk's Report 29 July 1841 (EP) PRO 30/12 Part II (1)

2 *Ibid*

3 *Ibid* 10 August 1841 *op cit*

4 *Ibid*

5 Clerk—25 26 27 January 1841 ISP(I) 8 February 1841 Nos 87 90 and 93

6 *Ibid* 13 14 February, 1841 ISP(I) 22 February and 1 March, 1841. Nos 91 and 137

7 Secretary's notes on Lahore (preceding the Government's Instructions to Clerk dated 29 March, 1841)—*vide* (EP) PRO 30/12 II (1)

confidence, that in view of the present uncontrolled military anarchy in the Punjab, the State of Lahore would soon cease to exist The Army did not recognise any chief, and Sher Singh would soon fly to his Cis-Sutlej estates, and seek British protection The Sindhianwala chiefs would return and regain power by winning over the soldiery to their side Sawan Mal, the governor of Multan, would declare his independence The Jammu family would consolidate their possessions in the hills, with Kashmir added to them. The tendency of events, observed Clerk, pointed to the dissolution of the Sikh State British interference had therefore become essential [1] He further observed, that the national feeling at Lahore favoured the march of a British force to restore order and establish Sher Singh's authority, though were it known, that he was inclined to seek British support, the Army would destroy him within an hour The Indian Government, he concluded, could claim compensation for the measure, establish a Residency at Lahore, and obtain free passage for its troops from the Lahore Government, without further demur [2]

These suggestions intrigued the Government of India, which still fondly hoped, that the Jammu brothers would be able to establish a stable government and give support to Sher Singh Auckland, therefore, wrote confidentially to Clerk that he was averse to these measures, undoubtedly, they offered a chance to the British to gain political power in the Punjab, but they would alter British relations both with the Sikhs and the Afghans Basically, British military interference could only be justified, if the anarchy at Lahore might not confine itself to the Punjab, such support should be given, if asked for, both by Sher Singh and the Darbar only against the mutinous soldiery [3]

11 A naive directive

Notwithstanding these views, Auckland instructed Clerk to give positive support to Sher Singh, military means for which purpose, would be placed at his disposal [4] However, armed support to Maharaja

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1 Broughton Papers(BM) 36474 *fol* 450b *ff* also Clerk s despatch of 8 February 1841 *op cit*

2 *Ibid fol* 450b

3 Auckland to Clerk (Private) 15 February 1841-Broughton(BM) *fol* 452-456

4 *Ibid fol* 456a 'We must collect Auckland informed his Agent at Ludhiana, 5 or 6 troops of horse 3 or 4 companies of foot artillery, 2 strong regiments of European Dragoons 2 of European infantry 5 regiments of native cavalry and 10 regiments of native infantry '

Sher Singh should be offered on these specific conditions "that all on the left of the Sutlej should be exclusively British, all on the right of the Indus exclusively Afghan" Besides, there should be free transit of British troops, and their presence should be paid for by Sher Singh [1]

12 Macnaghten s suggestions

At the same time, Sir William Macnaghten, the Envoy and Minister at Kabul, who had of late vexed the Indian Government by his lavish distribution of Durrani Stars, contended that the tripartite treaty had ceased to exist since Ranjit Singh's demise The suggestion seemed quite illogical, in view of the fact, that the passage for troops to Afghanistan, for which he was clamouring so loudly, was being demanded from the Sikh Government in accordance with that treaty [2] Further, the negotiator of the tripartite treaty, pointed out from the uncertain heights of Kabul, that as the Lahore kingdom was nearing dissolution, it was high time that the Sikhs restored to the Afghans, their territories on the Indus, including Peshawar [3] "Do what we may," Macnaghten concluded, "I believe, the time is not far distant, when we shall have a subsidiary force in the Punjab If the Shah got back the Sikh conquests on this side of the Indus, which I regard also as an inevitable event, he would have an accession of at least 50 lacs" [4]

Both Clerk and Macnaghten had the privilege of writing direct to the Home Government and their arguments were evidently gaining favour at Whitehall Auckland felt surprised at the warlike tone in regard to Lahore, in despatches from home, and commented sarcastically, that he would find it difficult to frame a declaration of war against the Sikhs, as suggested by these two functionaries [5]

Auckland therefore showed strong repugnance to these suggestions In his view the Sikhs had faithfully co operated with the British Shelton's Brigade was on its way to Peshawar without any hindrance [6] The first convoy for Afghanistan had crossed the Sutlej on 8 December[7].

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1 *Ibid fol* 454a

2 Auckland to Hobhouse 2 January 1841 *op cit fol* 444a

3 Maddock to Clerk 18 February 1841 ISP(I) 22 February 1841 No 93 also 29 March 1841 ISP(I) same date No 30

4 Broughton Papers(BM) 36474 Auckland 12 May 1841 *fol* 545b

5 Auckland—21 March 1841 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 468b

6 Clerk—30 November 5 7 December 1840- ISP(I) 14 21 December 1840 Nos 86 102 and 103 respectively

7 *Ibid* 10 December, 1840 ISP(I) 28 December 1840 No 102

Treasures and stores were being conveyed by Sikh escorts across the Punjab[1] The charges of any disloyalty against the Darbar had proved imaginary The intrigues of the Peshawar Barakzais had been stopped The suggestion of an arbitration in respect of the Sikh-Afghan boundaries had been accepted by the Lahore Government, who had also given up its claim on the Swat and Buner territories "Our convoys and our merchants and our officers," reported Auckland, "continue in perfect safety to traverse the Punjab, frequently under Sikh escort with stores and treasures of immense value"[2] Nothing, therefore, justified British interference inspite of the alleged sins of ommission and commission of the Lahore Government With the Sikhs as willing allies, a rosy picture was conjured up "If matters become settled, as it may be hoped in Afghanistan" he observed in February 1841, "two regiments will in each year descend the river, for rotation service at Quetta, Candahar and Cabul, and two will return from Cabul by the Punjab to the Provinces, and there will be passage in the other direction, of recruits and stores"[3]

13 British terms

On 18 February, Clerk was officially informed that the Governor General-in Council had decided to support Sher Singh. A military force, 12 000 strong under Major General Lumley, had been placed at the Agent's disposal for rendering aid to Sher Singh who was to be assured of British protection if he sought refuge in British territory[4] Assistance for restoring his authority in the Punjab would require the surrender by the Labore Government, of all its Cis Sutlej estates to the British, and all its trans-Indus territories, to Afghanistan Further, a sum of 40 lacs rupees would be paid by Sher Singh to cover the cost and risk of any military operation[5]

Thus, all seemed ready for the march of a British force to Lahore to disperse the Sikh army and restore Sher Singh's sovereignty But Clerk made a false move Early in March, he arrived at Lahore, and proposed to the Maharaja through the Lahore minister Faqir Aziz ud-Din, that for a high consideration, a British force could march to Lahore[6]

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1 *Ibid* 25 January 1841 ISP(I) 8 February 1841 No 87

2 Auckland to Hobhouse 15 February 1841 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol* 454a

3 *Ibid fol* 454b

4 Maddock to Clerk 18 February 1841 ISP(I) 22 February 1841 No 93

5 (EP) PRO 30/12 II(1) also Clerk to Maddock 26 March 1841 *op cit*

6 Clerk to Maddock 14 March 1841- ISP(I) 29 March, 1841 No 28

The Government of India disapproved the proposition but ultimately, acquiesced in it [1] The suggestion shocked the Darbar , it combined the court factions in favour of Sher Singh, but infuriated the Army, which pointed at the Maharaja as a traitor to the Sikh Panth The reaction of the Darbar was so strong that Clerk hastily retired to Ludhiana, and the proposed intervention of the British—the allies of the Sikhs, came to nothing The Governor-General contented himself by the despatch of an admonitory epistle to Sher Singh, rebuking him for the lack of all restraint exhibited by the Sikh Army [2]

14 Transformation of the Army

And yet, a short period of anarchy and military violence at Lahore, led the British Agent on the Sutlej to assume that Ranjit Singh's dynasty would soon cease to exist But he had failed to observe the bewildering transformation of the Sikh Army It had become the *Khalsa*, the executive sovereign of the State, assuming to itself the functions of the government, through the congregation of the *panchayats* or five elected members from each unit The process though crudely democratic, had a revolutionary impulse latent in it As a revolt of the soldiery against a corrupt government and an impulsive sovereign, it exhibited a vigorous resistance to foreign interference in the Punjab

British officials watched in dismay this transformation The general tone of Clerk's despatches was that of disorder and anarchy in the Punjab , that the Court was rent with intrigues, and the army completely licentious, and totally insubordinate Yet, the spirit of military violence did not rebel against the State [3] If an Akali fanatic had directed its energies or fed it on hatred of foreigners, it is doubtful whether the British Government would have been able to march large forces through the Punjab for operations in Afghanistan It was amazing that the Sikh Army did not come to blows with the British, when their position in Afghanistan was precarious

Clerk also miscalculated the fighting power of the Sikh army The Khalsa army, he reported, was an undisciplined rabble, and not a potent force The Jat Sikh, as a soldier, was inferior to the Dogra Rajput of the hills He was not amenable to discipline , a little of zealot, perhaps, but more of a mercenary Poor as a soldier, he was poorer in equip-

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1 Maddock to Clerk 29 March 1841 ISP(I) same date No 30

2 Governor General to Maharaja Sher Singh 26 April 1841 (EP) PRO 30/12 II(1)

3 Clerk to Maddock 8 13 25 April and 2 May 1841 (Enclosures) Governor General to Secret Committee, 13 May 1841 BISI (I) Vol 10

ment, and his pay was always in arrears The Sikh infantry was of inferior stamp, its cavalry yet untried against a superior force Its artillery was badly trained, and the fieldguns, badly mounted. The Sikhs, declared Clerk, were poor as soldiers and no match for either the Jammu levies or the Afghans [1] These estimates were grossly inaccurate, and proved expensive to the British in the Anglo-Sikh wars, a few years later.

15 Transactions of Broadfoot

Early in April, 1841, Major Broadfoot proceeded to conduct a *kafila* of the families of Shah Shuja and Shah Zaman through the Punjab to Kabul [2] The Darbar had agreed to the passage and provided a Sikh infantry escort to Broadfoot, who had also a newly raised regiment for the Shah's service in Afghanistan On his way to Peshawar, Broadfoot became unnerved at the prevalent hostile spirit of the Khalsa soldiery The sappers and the Gurkhas under his own command showed signs of disaffection, which he attributed to the influence of the successful mutiny of the Sikhs He began to suspect treachery on the part of his Lahore escort His startled imagination conjured up dangers around himself and everywhere, and he predicted that the end of the Sikhs was fast approaching, and that the next cold weather would see the fall of Ranjit Singh's dynasty.

Broadfoot took measures to protect the royal families with his newly raised levies At Mustang, he declared himself besieged, and incited the Muslin subjects of Lahore to take up arms against the mutinous Sikh soldiery advancing upon his camp [3] At Saidoo, he arrested the delegates of the Sikh battalion,[4] and a British brigade from Jalalabad was ordered, on a wild goose chase, to save him from the violent intentions of the Lahore troops [5] The *kafila*, however, arrived safely at Peshawar. Broadfoot had magnified his dangers and his extraordinary behaviour proved entirely unjustifiable, but the Agent at Ludhiana, supported his action against the Sikh troops [6] The Jalalabad Battalion, he said, had been moved on the advice of Mackeson

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1 Clerk's despatches—14 February, 1841-ISP(I) March, 1841 No 137-138, 22 April ISP(I) 3 May, 1841 No 122, 15 January, 1842- ISP(I) 31 January, 1842 Nos 74-75 10 February- ISP(I) 14 February, 1842 No 64

2 Clerk to Maddock 16 April, 1841 ISP(I) 17 May, 1841, No 117 (Enclosures copies of correspondence with Lahore on the subject)

3 *Ibid* 28 April and 3 May, 1841 ISP(I) 17 May, 1841 Nos 77 and 80

4 *Ibid* 25 May, 1841- ISP(I) 7 June, 1841 No 70

5 *Ibid* 11 May and 24 May- ISP(I) 7 June, 1841 Nos. 62-63 and 68

6. *Ibid* 25 May, 1841, *ut supra*

and General Avitable, who were positive of the danger, which surrounded Broadfoot It was, however, clear that Broadfoot had unduly magnified his apprehensions, and that, the incident had given grave offence to the Lahore Darbar, providing it with further proof of the evil designs of the foreigners

16 The Jammu rajas

About this time, the activities of the Jammu rajas to increase their power, came under notice The rise of the Jammu family and their relations with the State of Lahore, form an interesting study As tributary vassals of the Sikh Government, the Jammu rajas contributed annually to the state revenues, a sum of 5,970,000 rupees—an amount equivalent to 1/6th of the entire revenues of the State.[1] Strongly entrenched both in the civil and military[2] administration of the State, since Ranjit Singh's time, the Dogras were a powerful faction in the struggle for political power at Lahore While Dhian Singh guided with acumen, political intrigue for the enhancement of Dogra influence at the Darbar, his soldier brother Gulab Singh, endeavoured to extend their territories in the north Early in 1840, the ambitions of the Jammu family took a violent turn towards the north in the Chinese Tartary, when Zorawar Singh, the valiant and highly ambitious deputy of Gulab Singh in Ladakh, carried the Sikh arms to Balti and reduced it as a tributary of Lahore Ladakhi supremacy over the disputed areas of Garo and Mansarowar Lake was soon claimed, which was refuted from Lhassa A year later, when Zorawar Singh seized Garo and Iskardo, he clashed with British interests Immediately, the matter was taken up with the Lahore Darbar It was pointed out, that the aim of the Jammu rajas in the forward movement was to monopolise the shawl and wool trade with Chinese Tibet through Ladakh, to the detriment of the interests of British subjects The Darbar was warned that it would be held strictly responsible for all injurious proceedings on the part of those owing allegiance to it The activities of Zorawar Singh,

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1 These figures compiled by British officials, particularly Richmond in December 1843 in his *Memoir on Jammu Rajas*(EP) PRO 30/12 60 were (a) annual revenue—2,120 000 rupees (b) revenue on various farms—1 92> 000 custom duties on salt mines and town duties—1 500 000 and (d) annual tribute—4 25 000 rupee—total 5 970 000 rupees against the revenues of the State estimated at 32 475 000 rupees

2 Military command of the Lahore army assigned to the family consisted of 7 infantry regiments 1 cavalry and 3 artillery regiments with 50 garrison, 19 light artillery and field guns

it was made clear, had retarded the progress of free trade between British Iodia and the countries beyond the frontier [1]

Similarly, in August 1841 the extension of Dogra influence towards the Indus—both in Peshawar ond Kashmir, was prevented In April, Gulab Singh, who had been sent to put down a revolt in Kashmir, brought the iosurrection under eontrol, but set up his own stooge as the new governor thus increasing his influeoce [2] When in June 1841, General Avitable desired to he relieved of his post at Peshawar, the Govern ment of India objected to his contemplated replacement by Gulab Singh [3] The Darbar was informed, that the Government of India would not view with indifference, aoy attempt on the part of the Jammu rajas to add Peshawar to the extensive provinces already under their eootrol [4]

17 Aftermath of Massacre

The Kabul Insurrection of November 1841, and the events following it, had instantaneous repercussions on Anglo-Sikh relations The first alarming reports were received at Calcutta with incredulity, and as the full import of the disaster became known, there was perplexity and then bewildermeot and eonsteroation On 23 Decembar, Macnaghten was murdered, a month later the destruction of the Kabul force was eoofirmed Auckland's Afghan polioy had met with disaster The news of the disaster which had befallen the British troops in Afghanistan, was eommunicated to the Darbar io February 1842, but the measures eootemplated, were withheld [5] Tbe first eoncern was, of course, the safety of the British forces Opinions differed as to what should he done It could not he decided whether fresh armies should march for the reconquest of Afghanistan or whether a stand should he made on the Iodus or the Sutlej Auckland's mind was stunned with the blow Jasper Nicolls, the Commander-in-Chief, opposed any large forward movements for the reconquest, but Clerk was in favour of immediate reinforcements

Sale was at Jalalabad and prompt Sikh aid was essential to relieve his position The retention of Jalalabad appeared unnecessary, and it was decided to withdraw the garrison there, to Peshawar. Late in

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1 For correspondence on the subject *vide* ISP(I) 16 August 1841 No 39, 91 6 September 1841 No 42-44 and 13 September *op cit* No 65

2 Clerk to Government 3 September 1840- ISP(I) *op cit*

3 Government to Clerk, 14 June 1841 ISP(I) same date No 83

4 *Ibid* 2 August 1841 ISP(I) same date No 102 Governor General to Secret Committee 2 August 1841 BISL(I)

5 Maddock to Clerk 31 January 1842- ISP(I) same date No 105

November, Brigadier Wild with four regiments and without any artillery crossed the Sutlej and reached Peshawar with the purpose of pushing on to Jalalabad Another force under Brigadier McCaskill crossed the Sutlej on 4 January on its way northwards General George Pollock was selected to command the Army now being assembled at the frontier

Clerk clamoured for full support from Sher Singh The policy of the Darbar, however, continued to be weak and indecisive, and Sher Singh was suspected of duplicity if not of treachery But the spell of the invincibility of the British had been broken, and their prestige seriously lowered, in the eyes of their Sikh allies At Peshawar, the Muhammadan Auxiliary troops of Lahore had refused to leave thier cantonment Gulab Singh had removed the boats from Attock Mackeson therefore, remonstrated with the Lahore Government The Darbar gave him permission to order the movement of Avitable's troops, but the local commanders had received separate *parwanas* not to leave their stations [1]

Ferris' irregular Afghan regiments retreated to Jalalabad The Yusafzais from the country subject to the Sikhs attacked his camp [2] There was alarm and disorder in the Khyber Mackeson was shut up at Ali Masjid, which was besieged by the Khyberis till Avitable's forces came to his relief [3] The Khyberis had not yet openly declared against the British, but a rise in the Afgban tribal temper was visible Large Sikh forces began to collect around Peshawar, but their approach was viewed with distrust Mackeson made a foolish suggestion that Peshawar should be taken over from the Sikh [4] At the same time, the local Sikh commanders were frantically asked by him to reinforce it immediately with troops from Hazara [5] Sale was hard pressed, and Sher Singh was urged to advance Sikh troops on Jalalabad from Peshawar [6] Mackeson made a premptory demand on Avitable for 6,000 men to march on Jalalabad, but the Lahore governor reminded him that the troops at his disposal

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1 Mackeson to Clerk 20 December 1841 (PP) xxxvii 1843 Governor General to Secret Commitee 9 January 1842 BISL(I) para 18

2 Governor General to Secret Committee 2 December 1841 BISL(I) para 10

3 *Ibid* para 11

4 Clerk to Maddock, 21 December 1841 ISP(I) 10 January 1842 No 69

5 Mackeson to Clerk, 15 November 1841 (PP) op cit No 22

6 Clerk to Maddock 2 January 1842-ISP(I) 10 January 1842 No 118

were required for the protection of Peshawar[1] The frantic demands of the British produced evasive response from Sikh officials

18 Situation at Peshawar

The constant pressure of British officials at Peshawar increased the resentment of the local commanders Mackeson in vain tried to bribe the Muslim Auxiliary Battalion, but the troops refused to march except on instructions from Lahore[2] Clerk in the meantime, kept on hammering at the Court, accusing Sher Singh that the terms of the treaty were not being observed by his government He demanded that Gulab Singh should proceed to Peshawar from Hazara and act upon Mackeson's orders Sher Singh yielded to these demands Four battalions were dispatched to Peshawar and Gulab Singh was directed to comply with Mackeson s requests The British Agent, however, suspected that Sher Singh s influence over the army had been con siderably diminished The Sindhianwala chiefs had returned to Lahore, and Gulab Singh who appeared to have any authority over the Sikh troops, was prevented by them to proceed to Peshawar[3]

Brigadier Wild in the meanwhile, had arrived at Peshawar with the intention of forcing the Pass and giving support to Sale at Jalalabad He had neither cavalry nor artillery and Mackeson begged General Avitable for the loan of Sikh guns Days and weeks passed in making arrangements for their transport, but matters did not improve Wild reported to the Commander in Chief, that the Sikh soldiery was in such a disorganised and insubordinate state that no confidence could be placed in the Lahore Government[4] British discomfiture was viewed with unconcealed satisfaction by the Sikh commanders who were averse to any co operation The Sikh soldiery lacked any incentive and objected to being led by British officers into Afghan territory They refused to march even so far as Ali Masjid with the British forces and instead expressed freely to Avitable their desire of returning to Lahore[5] Wild tarried on at Peshawar Mackeson feared that the close inter course of British forces with the disaffected Sikh troops, would destroy their confidence, and create in them a spirit of insubordination[6]

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1 Mackeson to Maddock 28 November 1841 (PP) *op cit* No 59
2 Mackeson to Clerk 2 December 1841 (PP) *op cit* No 67
3 Clerk to Maddock 27 December 1841 ISP(1) 10 January 1842 No 114 Governor General to Secret Committee 9 January 1842 BISL(1) paras 19 20
4 Wild to Nicolls 8 January, 1842 (PP) xxxvii 1843
5 *Ibid*
6 Mackeson to Maddock 27 January 1842 (PP) xxxvii 1843 No 70 para 2

Sale, Mackeson and Macgregor clamoured for reinforcements The co operation of Lahore troops was doubtful, and in this gloomy state of affairs, the Commander in Chief ordered a force of 8,000 men to cross the Punjab, and move towards Peshawar [1] While this force moved under General Pollook northwards, Mackeson vainly endeavoured to win over Lahore troops with promises of extra pay [2]

It is easy to reconstruct what was happening at Peshawar The Indian Government had unwisely withheld from the Lahore authorities, its intention of withdrawal from Afghanistan The Khyberis were much excited by this intelligence, and Akbar Khan bad invited all the chiefs and tribes in the neighbourhood of Peshawar, to join him [3] The Afridis had heard of Akbar Khan's rebellion, and could not he trusted The Sikh troops still refused to march into Afghan territory, and Avitable held an unenviably dangerous position in urging them on to co operate with British forces [4] At last, he agreed to support Wild's movement and guard Ali Masjid, hut Mackeson had to bribe him with 140,000 rupees for payment to tbe Sikh battalions [5] But the Sikh regiments refused to act as mercenaries On 16 January, they mutinied, and Wild, in an attempt to march without them, met with a reverse [6] Ali Masjid was evacuated and Akbar Khan's horsemen encamped near it The British post of Lalpura also seemed to have been lost [7]

On 3 February, Pollock s Army of Retribution reached Attock [8] The British general heard tbe news of Wild's reverse on his march northwards, and on arrival at Peshawar two days later, he was faced with a serious situation Wild's brigade or what was left of it, was in a bad state The Sikh soldiers were deserting, and tbe Lahore Government seemed either indisposed or helpless to render any effective help It was, therefore, impossible for Pollock to advance on Jalalabad until reinforcements arrived It seemed dangerous to retain large British forces at Peshawar, when no reliance could be placed on Sikh

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee 9 January 1842- BISL(I) para 34

2 *Ibid* 22 January, 1842, *op cit* paras 7 9

3 Clerk—12 and 18 December 1841 Governor General to Secret Committee 9 January 1842 BISL(I) Vol 10 para 15

4 Clerk—26 De ember 1841 Governor General to Secret Committee 9 January 1842 *ut supra* para 18

5 Mackeson—27 January 1842, *ut supra* para 3

6 *Ibid* para 7

7 *Ibid*

8 Nicolls to Governor General 10 February 1842 (PP) *op cit* No 178

promises [1] But the confidence of the local authorities at Peshawar could not be gained, it was hoped that Gulab Singh's arrival would ensure control over the Lahore troops.

19 Ellenborough s arrival

On Lord Ellenborough's arrival in India in February 1842, he was confronted with an alarming situation in Afghanistan The garrisons of Jalalabad, Ghazni and Kelat-i-Ghazni were all surrounded by hostile Afghan forces The division of the army at Kandahar was unfit to move forward for lack of transport Of the five brigades moved across the Punjab for the relief of Jalalabad, three had reached Peshawar, the fourth had not yet crossed the Ravi, and the fifth had still to cross the Sutlej The affairs of the Punjab appeared to him somewhat more settled But at Peshawar, a Sikh army equal in strength to three brigades, stood hostile to Afghans as well as British [2]

When Gulab Singh arrived at Attock, he seemed reluctant to cross the river from fear of collision with the Nujeeb battalion [3] Mackeson and Lawrence both suggested the transfer of Jalalabad to the Jammu raja, as a ready incentive to move northwards [4] Clerk considered the suggestion not only dishonourable, but also incompatible with the long-standing Anglo-Sikh friendship [5] Ultimately, when on 14 February, Gulab Singh did arrive at Peshawar, Pollock found him quite untrustworthy and of no assistance to him [6] He was too cautious to be co-operative and began to adopt dilatory tactics [7]

While Pollock waited for further reinforcements, Clerk arrived at Lahore on 2 March to impress upon the Maharaja, the immediate necessity of effectual Sikh co-operation Sher Singh appeared friendly though cautious Help for the rescue of the Jalalabad garrison was asked for, and Sher Singh readily agreed to do what he could Pollock, he advised, should wait for the arrival of his own reinforcements, in which case, Gulab Singh would be instructed to co-operate with him to the best of his ability [8]

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1 Maddock to Clerk, 10 February, 1842 (PP) xxxvii, 1843

2. Ellenborough's Memorandum (to the Queen) 18 March 1842 (EP)PRO 30/12 29/11-13

3 Clerk—10 February, 1842, *op cit*

4 *Ibid.* 13 February, 1842, *op. cit*

5 *Ibid*

6 Pollock to Maddock, 16 and 23 February, 1842 (PP) *op cit* Nos 183 and 193

7 *Ibid* 15 March, 1842-(PP) *op cit* No 228

8 Clerk to Maddock, 6 March 1842-ISP(I) 21 March 1842. No 90

Clerk stayed on at the Court till the end of April to coax Sher Singh into action Large Sikh forces in the meanwhile collected at Peshawar Sher Singh was uneasy, but quite co operative 16 Sikh battalions, 2 brigades and several regiments—25,000 men all told, had been sent northwards Pollock had three brigades under his command, with the exception of two more of Wild's, with most of the latter's men being sick or wounded[1] He frowned upon the assemblage of such large Lahore forces around him But it was considered necessary to maintain them in the neighbourhood of Peshawar to facilitate the evacuation of the valley of Jalalabad Signs of rising distrust in the Sikh chiefs were visible, and the temper of Sikh soldiery was rising Sher Singh's active co operation with the British had rendered him extremely unpopular at the Darbar

On 16 April Pollock arrived at Jalalabad The Sikh irregulars occupied the Pass as far as Ali Masjid, but it appeared uncertain whether they would continue to hold it it indefinitely Gulab Singh's small garrison occupied an isolated position, and there was fear that the Khyberis might resort to treachery[2] While it was of the highest importance that the Sikhs should keep open the Pass for the retiring army, their advance to Jalalabad was extremely undesirable The Lahore Government was, therefore, told that their forces should not advance without Pollock s permission[3]

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1 Memorandum of troops (PP) xxxvii 1843 No 201

2 Governor General to Secret Committee 19 February 1842-BISL(I) para 26

3 Pollock to Maddock 18 April 1842- (PP) *op cit* No 277 Governor General to Secret Committee 17 May 1842 BISL(I) paras 6-7

for the European regiments, the Gurkha battalions including the Sirmur Gurkhas were armed with rifles Ambala was strengthened by a regiment each of European infantry and cavalry, 3 regiments of native infantry, a regiment of native regular cavalry and 2 batteries of horse artillery It was proposed to concentrate European regiments in or near the hills—between the Markanda and the Sutlej, 4 regiments of European infantry, 8 of native infantry, 2 of Gurkha Rifles, 1 of European Dragoons, 2 of native regular cavalry and 2 of irregular cavalry, 4 or 5 of fire batteries, would be stationed there At Ferozepur, a small fort, like Fort Tigne at Malta, was to be erected. "The movement of 14,000 men towards the Sutlej," commented Ellenborough, "would convince the Sikh Government of our loyal intentions!"[1] Thus was assembled the Army of Reserve on the Sutlej, to watch the Sikhs and act, if necessary.

At this juncture, Lord Ellenborough decided to terminate the tripartite treaty In Afghanistan there existed no constituted authority to execute its terms, at any rate, its objectives were now obviously unattainable In April, Sale had defeated the Afghan army under the walls of Jalalabad, and Pollock had forced the Khyber The Sikhs had co-operated well and there was no reason to doubt their good faith Clerk was, therefore, instructed to propose to the Sikh Government that the treaty should be declared at an end A declaration to that effect, accompanied by the revival of such articles of the treaty, as related to the possessions of Lahore and Sind, was suggested A new Anglo-Sikh treaty could be signed, provided the Darbar agreed to withhold its recognition to any Afghan Government, without a prior recognition of the same by the British Government.[2]

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Meanwhile, the Army of Reserve began to be augmented on the Sutlej In three months after the receipt of the Home Government's suggestions, 15,000 men—12 regiments of infantry (four European), four of cavalry, four troops of horse artillery, and three batteries of foot artillery reached the frontier outposts [3] Sabathu and Kasauli were reinforced, Karnal and Ambala were strengthened by European and Gurkha regiments [4]

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1 Ellenborough to Wellington 4 October 1842 *op cit* 30/12 (28/12) *fol* 47b

2 *Ellenborough Papers* PRO 30/12 (28/12) *fol* 27b *ff*

3 Ellenborough to Wellington 7 June 1842 (EP) *op cit fol* 23a *ff*.

4 *Ibid* 17 November 1842, *op cit*

Duke of Wellington, "into what false position their ambition leads them They will be obliged to keep their principal force in that quarter, and Lahore and Umritsar will remain with insufficient garrison, within a few marches of the Sutlej, on which I shall, in twelve days, at any time, be able to assemble three European and eleven native battalions, one European regiment of cavalry and twenty-four guns The State of the Punjab is, therefore, under my foot The conflict of parties in the Punjab will render it more dependent every year, and indeed, he who knows it best, does not think the Government can last a year I intend to be cautious and liberal to both parties, and wait till I am called in"[1]

The whole affair, however, ended in a fiasco Sher Singh was an incompetent fool Instead of seizing the opportunity of fulfilling the prophecy of the Gurus and realising Ranjit Singh's dream, he wasted his time in making frivolous proposals and imagining that he could act as a mediator between the British Government and the Afghans[2] A new treaty suggested by him in substitution of the one proposed by the British, was unacceptable to Ellenborough[3] Finally, on the retirement of the British army, he hesitated to accept Jalalabad, without a specific British engagement to aid him with men and money[4] The Indian Government was still agreeable to handing over Jalalabad to the Sikhs without entering into such engagement But Sher Singh could not make up his mind A Lahore mission travelled to Simla to obtain further assurances from the Governor General Ellenborough informed Sher Singh that Jalalabad could still be his, and that General Pollock had instructions to hand it over to the Sikhs, but no British help could be promised to them to retain it[5]

But before the order could reach Pollock, the fortifications of Jalalabad had been destroyed Thus, partly by misadventure and partly by the incapacity of Sher Singh, the Sikhs lost their only opportunity of occupying Jalalabad

4 A military pageant

The return of Pollock's army to Ferozepur in December 1842,

1 Ellenborough to Wellington 18 October 1842 (EP) PRO (28/12) *fol* 53 *ff*

2 Pollock to Maddock 14 July, 1842 (PP) xxxvii 1843 No 433 The Maharaja " Ellenborough wrote angrily to Pollock on the 29th is at war with the Afghans as we are and peace as well as war will be common to both the Governments. *op cit* No 435

3 Maddock to Clerk 29 July 1842- ISP(I) 31 August 1842 No 54

4 *Ibid* 8 August 1842 ISP(I) 12 October, 1842 No 64

5 Ellenborough to Pollock 18 October 1842 (PP) xxxvii 1843 No 538

3 The Jalalabad Offer

The offer of Jalalabad to the Sikhs was a trick quite unworthy of Lord Ellenborough The necessity of bribing Sher Singh had arisen earlier, to secure Sikh co operation in the Khyber Pass and also to ensure the diversion of large Lahore armies towards Afghanistan from Chinese Tibet, where they were employed in aggressive wars [1] Though the matter appeared rather delicate and impolitic, but since the Shah's death in Afghanistan, the acceptance of the offer by the Sikhs would not place them in false position Clerk therefore asked the Sikh Government, whether it would be willing to receive Jalalabad or Kabul or both, after the withdrawal of the British army [2]

Sher Singh agreed to accept the fort and the district of Jalalabad after the British evacuation of Afghanistan,[3] but it appeared doubtful whether he could retain it, without permanenly garrisoning the place with Sikh troops Alternatively, the delivery of Jalalabad to the Jammu rajas appealed to the Government Gulab Singh had proved so useful and the addition of the territory lying between the right bank of the Indus the Safed Koh range and the Himalayas to the Dogra dominions, would certainly promote British interests [4]

The proposal seemed quite extraordinary, considering how Auckland's Government had resisted fiercely this demand of Ranjit Singh in 1838 Ellenborough had failed to realise that his generosity in offering to hand over Afghan territory to the Sikhs, would be the cause of endless disputes between them Sher Singh accepted the offer to prop up his waning popularity He exhibited extraordinary zeal in co operating with the British, and a force of 5,000 Sikh soldiers was moved through the Khyber, and encamped near Jalalabad preparatory to occupying the fort [5]

As the Sikh armies converged on Peshawar, Ellenborough expressed his pleasure in these words "You will see,' he wrote to the

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1 Maddock to Clerk 27 April ISP(I) 1 June 1842 No 25 also *ibid* 16 and 26 May 1842 *ut supra*

2 See Clerk's despatches particularly ISP(I) 6 July and 2 November Nos 34 and 30A also Government to Clerk ISP(I) 6 July and 12 October 1842 Nos 39 and 57

3 Governor General to Secret Committee 17 August 1842 BISL(I) No 35 para 13

4 Maddock to Clerk 26 May 1842 *ut supra* Governor General to Secret Committee 17 May 1842 BISL(I) No 10

5 Maddock to Clerk 25 June 1842 (PP) xxxvii 1843 No 391

Duke of Wellington, "into what false position their ambition leads them They will be obliged to keep their principal force in that quarter, and Lahore and Umritsar will remain with insufficient garrison, within a few marches of the Sutlej on which I shall, in twelve days, at any time, be able to assemble three European and eleven native battalions, one European regiment of cavalry and twenty-four guns The State of the Punjab is, therefore, under my foot The conflict of parties in the Punjab will render it more dependent every year, and indeed, he who knows it best, does not think the Government can last a year I intend to be cautious and liberal to both parties, and wait till I am called in' [1]

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3 Maddock to Clerk 29 July, 1842 ISP(I) 31 August 1842 No 54

4 *Ibid* 8 August 1842 ISP(I) 12 October 1842 No 64

5 Ellenborough to Pollock 18 October 1842 (PP) xxxvii 1843 No 538

brought to an end, the most distressing episode in Anglo-Afghan relations After destroying the fortress of Ali Masjid, the returning army was given a magnificient reception by General Avitable, but its march through the Punjab was gloomy and uneventful Aeross the Sutlej at Ferozepur, a grand military pageant with unnecessary pomp had been ordered by Ellenborough to celebrate its return 4,000 Sikh troops witnessed the military manoeuvres of the united armies of Reserve and Afghanistan—a total force of 40,000 British troops assembled presenting a mighty military array on the Sutlej

The military pageant at Ferozepur also provided an occasion for the meeting of the Sikh ruler and the Governor-Genral Lord Ellenborough was desirous of expressing his gratitude for the Sikh help in the operations in Afghanistan, and also to impress upon his Sikh allies, the might of British armed force assembled there But the Lahore Darbar was represented by minister Dhian Singh and Kanwar Partap Singh Maharaja Sher Singh had found it inconvenient to attend because of a regrettable incident, which had taken place a few days earlier[1] Lehna Singh Majithia, a Lahore emissary, sent to wait upon the Governor-General on his arrival at Ludhiana, had inadvertently kept Lord Ellenborough waiting for two hours, and even tually had failed to arrive It was suspected that his misbehaviour was deliberate, that it had been planned by the Dogra minister Dhian Singh, who was averse to the forthcoming meeting between his sovereign and the Governor-General at Ferozepur. The matter had given offence to Ellenborough, who did not aeeept the plea that the emissary's misdemeanour was due to his misunderstanding of the ceremonials A public apology from the Sikh Government had been demanded,[2] and conceded with a bad graee by Sher Singh,[3] who had treated the British protest lightly, but when Ellenborough prohibited Clerk from proceeding to Lahore to invite the Maharaja personally to Ferozepur, Sher Singh hastened to make ample apologies for the misconduct of his emissary[4] Consequently, Sher Singh did not come to

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1 Clerk to Government 12 December 1842 ISP(I) 11 January, 1843 No 3A

2 Government to Clerk 15 December, 1842 ISP(I) 18 January, 1843 No 4

3 *Ibid* same date *op cit* No 11

4 Ellenborough to Wellington 18 January, 1843- (EP) PRO 30/12(28/12) *fol* 72 Though the new delegation was received with reserve and without usual honours it seems that Lord Ellenborough allowed the matter to be forgotten He visited the prince s camp to receive the presents meant for the Queen of England and also attended a review of the Sikh troops—*vide* Ellenborough to Queen same date *op cit*

Ferozepur, hut the minister and the prince attended the grand review of the British troops assembled there

Thus, unattended hy the Sikh monarch, ended in apparent jubilation, a highly irksome phase of Anglo Sikh relations Despite their final victory, the British had gained a humiliating experience and lost prestige The Sikhs had exhibited strong repugnance towards their English allies for their persistent endeavours to establish a right of passage for their armed forces through the Punjab. Anglo Sikh relations had heen severely strained , and so far as the Afghans were concerned, it had resulted in a legacy of hatred—hoth against the British and the Sikhs

5 Report of a Mission

A return mission had heen sent hy Ellenhorough to Lahore It was cordially received hy Sher Singh, who paraded hefore it, the whole Sikh army of 65,000 men and 200 guns The visiting officials were quite impressed The Sikh irregulars, they reported, were excellent fighters. The troops were disciplined, some in French, some in English and some in Sikh manner A large portion of the *fauj i-'ain* or the regular army, was organised on European pattern The infantry, drilled into a strong fighting force by General Ventura, was well trained and disciplined , and the cavalry had heen perfected hy the French General Allard. Artillery was the main show-piece of the Sikh army , it had heen hrought to the level of European accuracy hy General Court and Colonel Gardner The Sikh army, they reported, was formidahle hoth in numhers and strength, it held no rival on the Indian subcontinent[1] On its return from Lahore, the mission also reported, that Ventura, the French General of the Sikh Government, had acquired great influence over the Maharaja It was further supposed that the Frenchman would take advantage of the recent withdrawal of British forces from the Sutlej and persuade the Sikhs to invade British territory There was, however, no ground for such belief Sher Singh might have clung to Ventura like a drowning man, hut the positive aversion of the Khalsa army heing led hy foreigners was too strong to justify the fears of the Indian Government

6 Assassination of Sher Singh

Meanwhile, the political situation at Lahore gradually worsened Amidst the rivalries of the court factions and the army regimental committees, Sher Singh held a precarious position Further, he felt extremely uneasy under the influence of Dhian Singh, with whom he

1 *Ibid*

had conspired to murder Chand Kaur, Kharak Singh's widow, in the June of the previous year[1] The Sindhianwala chiefs had returned to Lahore The Maharaja had found a new favourite, Gurhaksh Singh, a Bhai with priestly cunning and capable of firing the army with religious fanaticism, whom he tried to use as a counterpoise against the two Court factions and the Army But Sher Singh was playing a losing game There being no chance of stability at Lahore, Dhian Singh found his position anamolous he tried to reconcile the Sindhianwala faction by an offer of deposing Sher Singh and replacing their nominee, minor Dalip Singh on the throne The Jammu brother's credit had sunk low at Ludhiana, and Richmond strongly advised Sher Singh to reconcile with the Sindhianwala chiefs[2] Sher Singh accepted this advice, but stood in a state of doubt and fear for his own life The result was that on 15 September, the Sindhianwala chiefs killed him and prince Partap Singh The same day, they also assassinated the Dogra minister Dhian Singh[3]

Thus, both the sovereign and the minister in their attempts to destroy each other, met an inglorious end Sher Singh's short rule had been for him a continuous struggle against the army, his Dogra minister and the Sindhianwala faction Though he had been a good soldier, of bodily activities and address, yet he was not destined to become an outstanding figure in Sikh history Marred by the stigma of illegitimacy, he was also a man of irresolute nature and wavering loyalties Favourite earlier with the Army, his furtive attempts at securing British help to keep him in power, had cost him his popularity. Dhian Singh, who had helped him to ascend the throne, also kept him "in mental thraldom"[4] He lacked the will to rule, and his shifty politics and subservience to the Dogra minister had rendered him extremely obnoxious to the Sindhian wala faction The assassination of raja Dhian Singh, on the other hand, removed from the Court, a picturesque figure of Oriental statesmanship and intrigue Since 1839, he had filled the office of the principal Vazier of the State with omnipotence, but his influence at the court had waned recently Though still esteemed for his shrewdness and political manoeuvrings, he was suspected to be dangerous and of ambitious

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1 Clerk to Government 15 June 1842 Governor General to Secret Committee 6 August 1842 (No 28) BISL(I) para 9

2 Richmond to Government 5 September, 1843 ISP(I) 23 March 1844 No 455

3 *Ibid* 17 18 September 1843 ISP(I) 23 March 1844 No 461 463

4 Clerk's Report—10 August 1840 and 29 July 1841. (EP) PRO 31/12 Part II(i)

views [1] Acutely anti British, and charged with underhand dealings and scheming for the advancement of the interests of the Jammu family, he was regarded as the main cause of the instability of the Lahore Government under Sher Singh [2]

The triple murder created chaos at Lahore For a while, it removed the semblance of any sovereign authority, with which, the Indian Government could maintain any intercourse From across the Sutlej, these unceremonious happenings were watched with dismay, and measures were proposed for the protection of the frontier [3] Meerut military authorities were notified that disorders in the Punjab might necessitate the movement of British troops to the Sutlej [4]

7 Ellenborough s policy

It is relevant at this stage to examine Ellenborough's policy towards the Punjab The official correspondence of the year 1843 leaves no doubt, that he was tempted to support Sher Singh, notwithstanding the fact, that the treaty of 1809 precluded any such British intervention Fear of a premature involvement in military operations beyond the Sutlej, prevented him from taking any such step at a time, when the British position on that frontier was higly unsatisfactory He had regretted the disbandment of the Army of Reserve early in January as this measure had left Ferozepur and Ludhiana without any support nearer than Karnal [5] Secondly, British interference would not have produced a stable Sikh government As the parties at Lahore were equally balanced, non-interference could effect a settlement advantageous to British interests It could free the Jammu hills from Lahore authority, in which event, the British would become the protectors of the Sikhs in the heart of the Punjab But their right flank from the Sutlej to the Indus would he exposed to attack from the hills To remedy this, a simultaneous occupation of the hills would become necessary For operations of such a magnitude, the Indian Government was quite unprepared, hut it was apparent, that the state of affairs at Lahore would ultimately lead to them [6] For

1 Auckland to Hobhouse, 20 November 1840 Broughton(BM) *fol* 372b

2 Clerk s Report 29 July 184' (EP) PRO 30/12 Part II (1)

3 Richmond to Government 18 September 1843 ISP(I) 23 March 1844 No 469

4 *Ibid* 24 September 1843- ISP(I) *op cit* (Enclosure to Major General Commanding Meerut Division) No 482

5 Governor General to Secret Committee 20 January 1843- BISL(I) Vol 28 para 5

6 Ellenborough to Duke of Wellington 20 October 1843- (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/12) *fol* 106 *ff*

these obvious reasons, no action beyond the Sutlej could be contemplated

8 Dalip Singh

The assassination of Sher Singh and the subsequent murder of Dhian Singh led to the virtual transfer of all power into the hands of the Army The committees in the several corps began to correspond and act in concert [1] Hira Singh, a son of Dhian Singh, assisted by his uncle Suchet Singh, aroused a section of the army and with promises of reward and increased pay, appealed to it for retribution Soon the Sindhianwala chiefs, Ajit Singh and Lehna Singh were surrounded by the troops and put to death [2] Attar Singh, the head of the Sindhianwala faction, who was in British territory, thought it prudent to remain there Gulab Singh marched on Lahore with his hillmen Ranjit Singh's two adopted sons, Kashmira Singh and Peshawara Singh emerged from obscurity to claim the kingdom But the fort had been occupied by Hira Sigh, and the Khalsa army panchayats had proclaimed Dalip Singh, a minor son born to Ranjit Singh' favourite wife Jindan, as their sovereign Hira Singh was appointed Vazier.[3]

9 Hira Singh

The effiminate Hira Singh, the new Vazier, was neither a soldier nor possessed the qualities of his illustrious father, whose murder he had so successfully avenged A strikingly handsome youth, he had been a great favourite of Ranjit Singh, who had conferred on him the title of raja From his childhood he had been pampered both by the Maharaja and his powerful father, and as such, he had grown up an arrogant and spoilt youth, utterly devoid of intelligence or political courage At one time, the imaginative Mai Chand Kaur had proposed to adopt him to win over the Dogra faction Raised to the position of *wazarat*, he now stood unsure of himself, and in mortal danger for his life Having possessed himself of all the confiscated estates of the Sindhianwalas and the most valuable jewels of the State, he proposed to fly to Jammu and the safety of his ancestral hills [4]

With the Sindhianwalas practically wiped out and their supporters done to death, the Dogras, it appeared, would rule the Punjab On 5

1 Richmond—19 September, 1843 ISP(I) 23 March 1844 No 475
2 *Ibid*
3 *Ibid* 20 September, 1843 ISP(I) 23 March 1844 No 477
4 Ellenborough to the Queen 20 October, 1843- (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/11), *fol* 97a

October, Richmond reported that Hira Singh with the help of his Dogra uncles would be able to maintain order in the Punjab [1]

10 Jawahir Singh

Towards the middle of November, Gulab Singh arrived at Lahore, but it became evident, that both he and his brother Suchet Singh resented the sudden ascendency of their nephew to power [2] The rani s brother Jawahir Singh, on the other hand, was offended by the rise of the Dogras to power in the Punjab He proclaimed the young Maharaja s life to be in danger, and warned the army panchayats that unless the Dogra faction was banished from the State, he would carry his sovereign nephew to the other side of the Sutlej and demand the aid of the British Government This so infuriated the army that Jawahir Singh was quietly put in chains Richmond suspected that Suchet Singh was concerned in these proceedings [3]

The Army thus became paramount It proceeded to extort large sums of money from the new Vazier Hira Singh had no authority over it and relied more on his Italian adviser, General Ventura The position of Ranjit Singh's few European military officers still in the service of Lahore, was not very comfortable Avitable had retired to Italy in 1843, and in the September of the same year, Court arrived at Ferozepur, where he narrated to the British Agent his observations on the recent happenings at Lahore [4] Ventura himself felt insecure at the Sikh capital, and despatched intelligence to the British on the state of affairs in the Punjab [5]

11 Ventura s observations

The observations of these two officers were accepted by Lord Ellen borough's Government as authentic accounts of the state of affairs at Lahore Whether the conclusions arrived at by these disgruntled European military officers of the Lahore Government had any ultimate effect on Ellenborough's policy towards the Punjab, is doubtful, but the Indian Government did feel convinced that the Punjab would soon fall under British management [6] Briefly, Ventura had predicted immediate

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1 Richmond—5 October and 25 October 1843- ISP(I) 23 March 1844 Nos 485 and 524

2 *Ibid* 16 November 1843- ISP(I) *op cit* Nos 530

3 *Ibid* 28 November 1843- ISP(I) *op cit* Nos 535 536

4 *Ibid* 28 September 1843 ISP(I) *op cit* No 490 (Enclosure)

5 *Ibid* 2 October 1843- ISP(I) 23 March 1844 No 492 (Enclosure an extract from General Ventura)

6 Ellenborough to the Duke of Wellington 20 October 1843 (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/12) fol 106 *ff*

anarchy in the Punjab The tendency of events at Lahore, he observed, was to separate the Jammu hills from the State of Lahore Hira Singh would soon he compelled to flee to Jammu, where an independent Rajput state would he formed hy Gulah Singh A Sikh Government would prohably exist for some time at Labore, hut the province of Multan would break loose from all connection with the Sikhs In the north, the Afghans would ultimately recover Pesbawar and its dependencies All tbis, anticipated Ventura, would lead to some conflict, hut ultimately, hotb tbe Sikhs and the Rajputs would demand British protection[1]

Ellenhorough took the same view as General Ventura[2] Although, Richmond was instructed to ensure tbe Darhar of the British Government's desire for the continnance of Sikh rule in tbe Punjah, Ellenborough wrote to the Duke of Wellington in October "I look to the protection of our Government being ultimately extended to the Sikhs of the Plains and the Rajputs of the Hills and tbe Mussalmans of Mooltan, precisely as it is now to the Sikh Chiefs on the left of the Sutlej'[3] Two months later, he wrote, that the territories whicb formed the dominions of Ranjit Singh, might he considered as already divided hetween tbe Sikhs of the plains and the Rajputs of the hills[4]

For four months, the British Government refused to recognise the minor Dalip Singh, on the ground, that no formal announcement of succession had been received by the Governor General[5] It viewed with suspicion Hira Singh's attempts to reconstruct some sort of government Gulab Singh's presence failed to have any sobering effect on the army panchayats, who seemed to have usurped the functions of the Khalsa government "The whole army remains at Lahore, the real master of the Government," wrote Ellenborough on 19 December, "its inaction is only purchased hy largesses, but these cannot always he given, nor can the promised rate of pay be disbursed The revenues are no longer regularly paid, and they would in any case be insufficient There must he some violent termination to tbis state of things"[6]

12 **A spate of revolts**

In Marcb, both Kashmira Singh and Pesbawara Singh revolted at

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1 Richmond to Government 2 October 1843 (Enclosure) *ut supra*
2 Ellenborough to the Queen 20 October 1843 (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/11)
3 Ellenborough to Wellington 20 October 1843 *op cit fol* 109ab
4 Ellenborough to the Queen 19 December 1843 *op cit*
5 Richmond to Government 16 January, 1843 ISP(I) 23 March 1844 No 556
6 Ellenborough to the Queen, 19 December, 1843. (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/11)

Sialkot. The town was besieged by Lahore troops and the pretenders submitted, but were finally pardoned. A general amnesty followed and Jawahir Singh, the rani's brother was set free[1] A few months later, a similar attempt was made by Attar Singh, the surviving Sindhianwala chief, who had been a refugee at Thanisar in British territory An impression was created that Attar Singh was invading the Punjab to subvert Hira Singh's authority in alliance with the British Government[2] He had been allowed to move towards the Sutlej although his hostility towards the Lahore Government was well-known[3] A small body of Lahore troops crossed the Sutlej to intercept him and his ally Kashmira Singh The error of the British Agent at Ludhiana made it impossible for the Indian Government to protest against the violation of the treaty of 1809, and the matter was allowed to be forgotten[4] In reply to the Darbar's protest, the march of Attar Singh was much regretted[5] The British Agent was directed to use force and prevent in future, any person proceeding through British territory with hostile intentions against Lahore[6] The rebels, in the meantime, had been joined by Bhai Bir Singh, a priest of influence and reputed sanctity and "regarded with superstitious reverence by the Sikhs"[7] A Lahore contigent under General Labh Singh marched to oppose them, and in an action, which took place on 7 May on the *right* bank of the Sutlej, within a march of Ferozepur, all the three insurgents were killed[8] From the papers taken after the battle, it was discovered that most of the influential Sikh chiefs at the Darbar were directly implicated in the attempt at subverting Hira Singh's authority[9]

About the same time, Suchet Singh marched on the capital to remove his nephew from the *wazarat*, but he was killed in the attempt[10] The death of his uncle saved Hira Singh's life but it rendered him more dependent upon the Army, which was reported to have become

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1 *Punjab Intelligence*—ISP(I) 18 May, 1844 No 19
2 Ellenborough to the Queen 10 June 1844 (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/11)
3 Richmond—10 May, 1844-ISP(I) 15 June 1844 No 204
4 Government to Richmond 12 June 1844 ISP(I) 13 July 1844 No 125
5 Currie to Richmond 12 June 1844 (EP) PRO 30/12 (106)
6 *Ibid* 12 June, 1844 *op cit*
7 Ellenborough to the Queen 10 June 1844 (EP) PRO *op cit*
8 Richmond—10 May 1844 ISP(I) 15 June, 1844 No 204
9 Ellenborough to the Queen 10 June 1844 *ut supra*
10 Richmond—29 March 1844 ISP(I) 15 June 1844 No 172

"more insolent and extortionate than ever in its demands"[1] He attempted to dissuade the Sikh troops from making an inroad on the British frontier The death of Bir Singh made him the object of much animosity at the Darbar, and the regimental committees accused him of inducing them to march against the holy man under false pretences Hira Singh tried to appease the Army by new donations, but he failed to find them any adequate employment Released from all control, the troops were desirous of war or plunder "But by far," wrote Lord Ellenborough, "the largest portion of the Sikh army is now on furlough, and on the part of Hira Singh there is no indication of any hostile intention, although his feelings will never become those of confiding friendliness, which guided the councils of Runjeet Singh"[2]

13 Suchet Singh s estate

The destruction of Suchet Singh had also weakened the position of Gulab Singh at Lahore Hira Singh dreaded from his hostility, which was aggravated by the dispute respecting the succession to Suchet Singh's immense property Serious disagreement was also created between the Darbar and the Government of India in respect to the deceased s estate, part of which was in British territory Early in April, Saunders Abbott, the political assistant at Ferozepur reported, that treasure valued at 1,500,000 rupees belonging to Suchet Singh had been discovered Immediately, the Agent at Ludhiana ascertained the Darber's wishes as to its disposal[3] At first the Indian Government thought of confiscating the treasure, and regretted that the Darbar had been led to expect it would be made over[4] It was then decided to have it removed secretly to Meerut,[5] but was finally allowed to remain in deposit at Ferozepur, until a rightful claimant was discovered[6]

Since Suchet Singh had died without male issue, both Hira Singh and Gulab Singh, as next of kin, could claim his estate Cameron, the legal member of the Council, was consulted as to who should administer the estate pending a final decision as to its disposal The Lahore Government regarded it as the escheated property of a rebel feudatory, but the claim was not accepted, on the grounds that the claimants had to

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1 Ellenborough to the Queen 21 April 1844 *op cit*
2 *Ibid* 14 July 1844 *op cit*
3 Richmond—7 April 1844 ISP(I) 18 May 1844 No 21
4 Government to Richmond 19 April 1844 ISP(I) *op cit* No 23
5 *Ibid* 22 April 1844 ISP(I) *op cit* No 24
6. *Ibid* same date *op cit* No 25 Correspondence of the Government with the Agent on this subject is also in (EP) PRO 30/12 (106)

prove their title in a British Court Delay was unavoidable in determining whether the property was public or private The uncle and nephew disagreed amongst themselves, and a widow of Suchet Singh had also preferred claim to it[1]

The matter was allowed to drag on for months, and it became a constant source of irritation to the British and made the Sikhs suspicious of British designs Ellenborough wanted to settle it, but legal formalities stood in the way[2] The Darbar demanded its surrender and, compelled by the Army, tried to obtain it by forgery. In March 1846, Hardinge accepted it as part payment of the 7,500,000 rupees due from Gulab Singh for the transfer of Kashmir to him

14 Disagreement over Mowran

Differences between the two governments also arose in respect of a village Mowran, which the ruler of Nabha had granted to Ranjit Singh In 1844, the Nabha chief was displeased with Hukam Singh, the Lahore grantee and a Nabha subject, and with the concurrence of the British Agent, resumed the village Although the Darbar remonstrated, the Government of India upheld the resumption, on the ground, that the raja of Nabha, a protected chief had made the gift without the knowledge of the British Government, which made the transfer invalid[3] These two incidents caused bitter feelings among the Sikhs, and were recounted by the Darbar and the Army, among others, as their grievances against the British before the commencement of the Anglo Sikh war

15 Setback

During the latter part of 1843 and early 1844, British relations with the Sikh Government had deteriorated An agent of Dost Muhammad was reported to be at Lahore.[4] While large number of troops hovered round the capital, a body of Sikh troops had been posted at Kasur The proximity of the discontented Sikh soldiery to the British frontier was highly unwelcome[5] The absence of an adequate British force on the Sutlej, it was feared, might prove an incentive to desultory Sikh inroads into the territories of the protected states Ambala was,

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1 Richmond—10 September 1844 ISP(I) 26 October, 1844 No 93

2 Ellenborough Papers—PRO 30/12 (106)

3 Currie (Foreign Secretary) to Richmond 11 June 1811 (EP) PRO 30/12 (106)

4 Richmond to Government 12 December, 1843- ISP(I) *op cit* No 537.

5 Ibid 20 and 27 December, 1843- ISP(I) *op cit* Nos 541 and 547

therefore, ordered to keep troops in readiness to counteract any Sikh incursions.[1]

A discontented Sikh army on the borders of British possessions constituted a serious menace Confident of its own strength, proud of its past conquests and desirous of war or plunder in the future, it could not be ignored It was, therefore, essential for the Government of India to take every precaution. As a first step, the Ludhiana Agency began to prepare statistical information on the Sikh Army, its dispositions and military resources , the forts and garrisons in the Punjab, the number of Europeans in the service of the Sikhs, and the political and military conditions in and around Gulab Singh's possessions.[2] Secondly, after 5 years of war, the Indian Army needed to be overhauled and re-equiped. Such measures required means and time, and according to Ellenborough's military advisers, could not be compled till late 1845. Any operations beyond the Sutlej, apart from their magnitude and protracted nature, were deemed too hasty to ensure success.[3]

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1 *Ibid* 22 December 1843- ISP(I) *op cit* No 544

2 These statistical sheets were ordered to be prepared *vide*. particularly Government to Richmond, 31 January, 1844 ISP(I) 23 March, 1844. Nos 557-558, 562 , and are included in the despatches of Richmond and Broadfoot, see those of 13 February 1844 ISP(I) *op cit* No 552 26 January and 19 March, 1844-ISP(I) 27 April, 1844 No. 180-81 . 26 October, 1844, *op cit* No 113 ; 28 December, 1844 No 104 , 23 March, 1845, *op cit* No 54-56

3 Ellenborough to Duke of Wellington, 15 February, 1844-(EP) PRO 30/12 (28/12) *fol* 128a *ff*

Chapter XIV

The Transformation of the Sikh Army

1 The Sikh Army

Reports compiled at the N W. Frontier Agency, brought early in 1844, astonishing information regarding the composition, strength and the power of the Sikh army. According to the statistics collected by the British functionaries, and the information supplied by the news-writers across the Sutlej, the regular army of the State of Lahore was not only formidable but possessed impressive fighting power—a fact, which belied the earlier erroneous estimates of Clerk that it was ill-equipped and weak; and of Richmond that it was indisciplined, mercenary and licentious Composed of mixed racial elements—Sikhs, Muhammadans, Hindustanis, Hillsmen and the Gurkhas, it was also commanded by Sikh, Hindu, Muslim and European officers[1] It had 60 regiments of trained infantry (92,000 men), which included the Akalis (5,000 men) and the garrison companies (45,000 men) Its cavalry contained 8 regular regiments (4,800 horse), 20 regiments of the *Ghorchara* dare-devils (12,000 horse), and a Jagirdari reserve of 15,000 horse—a total of 31,800 horse. Its artillery strength was staggering Inclusive of the garrison artillery, and exclusive of numerous mortar companies and camel swivel corps, the reports showed that the Sikh army possessed 228 pieces of light artillery and 384 heavy field-guns Against an estimated total revenue of 3,24,75,000 rupees, the military expenses of the State of Lahore, inclusive of the annual land assignments to military officers, were computed at 1,00,94,076 rupees. If we also take into account the various enhancements of pay of the soldiers effected under pressure from the regimental committees since 1841, the Lahore army in 1844 cost a little over 2,00,00,000 rupees or about 2/3rd of the fast depleting revenues of the State[1]

2 Its belittlement

Periodical intelligence reports showing the strength and dispositions

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1 An examination of the British official reports regarding the composition of the Sikh army reveals that the infantry and cavalry regiments were 60% Sikh, 20% Hindu and 20% Muslim and others including the Gurkhas According to these statistics the composition of the corp commanders in 1844 was as under Infantry-Sikh 36, Hindu 16, Muslim 3 and European 5 Cavalry-Sikh 3 Muslim 2 and European 1. Artillery (guns under commanders)-Sikh 240, Muslim 38 and European 69 The artillery regiments were predominantly Muslim and some were commanded by Europeans

of the Sikh armies begin to appear in the *India Secret Proceedings* from September 1843 [1] In January 1842, Ellenborough's mission from Lahore had brought back information of great value concerning the composition and the fighting power of the Lahore forces [2] Early in 1844, Lieutenant J D Cunningham had drawn up for the Government, a detailed *Narrative of the Military Resources and the Political Conditions in the Punjab* [3] It is, therefore, evident that the information pertaining to the strength of the Sikh army, its dispositions and resources was available to the Government of India before Lord Ellenborough left India in July 1844 In sharp contrast to the earlier reports, the new information was positive and highly disconcerting, yet, it was considered as highly exaggerated A republican impulse in the ranks being completely abhorrent to the British military genius, the general character of the Sikh army became a favourite theme of criticism by British officials in India Added to it, was the disparity of the emoluments between a British sepoy and a Sikh soldier—the latter's pay having been more than doubled by the successive *nazarats* since 1841, under pressure from the regimental committees—which had infected the British sepoy as became evident in the Ferozepur Mutiny of March 1844 [4] There were also signs that discontentment might spread to other Indian regiments "The donations obtained and pay extorted by these mutinous troops and the high pay promised—12 rupees," wrote Ellenborough to the Duke of Wellington in October 1843, "may I rather fear, act injuriously upon some indifferent regiments on the frontier There has already been an indication in that very bad regiment—the 64th at Ludhiana" [5] Above all, an all pervasive tendency towards a democratic revolution in the Khalsa Army, was viewed with extreme distrust

To the British, therefore, the insurgence of a republican impulse in the Khalsa Army appeared as a revolution—'a successful mutiny' Its numbers and strength, and its transformation into an executive sovereign at Lahore, excited their amazement British resentmoment against this transformation of the Sikh army began its belittlement Wade, Clerk, Richmond and Broadfoot decried its dangerous character The

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1 *Punjab Intelligence Sheets* in ISP(I) start much earlier in 1841 These also contain observations on Sikh forces and the dispositions of the Sikh army

2 *Ellenborough Papers* 18 January 1843 30/12(23/12) *fol* 72 *ff*

3 ISP(I) 28 March 1845 Nos 55 and 66

4 (FP) PRO 30/12 (60) contains correspondence on the Ferozepur Mutiny

5 Ellenborough to Duke of Wellington 20 October, 1843 (EP)PRO 30 12 (23 12)

transformation of the Sikh Army, they moaned, had rendered it into a disorganised force—extremely licentious, violent and mutinous 70 000 Sikh soldiers were concentrated at Lahore They desired plunder and war ; and released from all control of the civil government, they were in the most perfect state of equipment and discipline[1] Though sensed correctly, this fact was never admitted publicly by the British authorities in India Conclusions were drawn by them from the fictitious observations of their functionaries at the N W. Frontier Ellenborough wrote to the Home Government about the "successful mutiny" in the Sikh Army The Army, he said, was paramount Everything was managed by the regimental committees, which correspond and act in concert. The donations and pay extorted could only be paid for a short time[2] The aversion of the Khalsa Army for all foreigners, was unmistakable and positive[3] The Sikh neighbours of theirs, he added, were more dangerous to them their government was controlled by the Army, who appropriated to itself the state revenues, making an increase of pay, as the price of its adhesion to the ruler[4] The Army, he, concluded, was in reality, the real master at Lahore[5] Obsession about the mutinous character of the Sikh army, therefore, continued at Fort William Lord Hardinge inherited these biassed views from his predecessor It must, however, be not forgotten that as a seasoned soldier, he immediately realised the danger from the proximity of a militant neighbour, "whose worse feature was deemed as the success of mutiny in the army of its government"[6] He complained "There being no abatement in the anarchy and mutiny of the Sikh Army , they go where they please and every military operation depends upon their temper and caprice at the moment"[7] It is, however, clear that he had fully realised the strength and power of the Sikh army which had maintained Ranjit Singh's dominions in fact by war and conquest, and had crushed with ruthless firmness, every revolt against it Having become the real power at Lahore, it stood poised to oppose any infringement of the sovereignty of the *Khalsa* "The panchayat system," Hardinge admitted grudgingly, "by its well organised power founded upon the customs of the people in the villages, will endure

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1 Ellenborough to the Queen 21 April 1844 *op cit* 30/12 (28/11)

2 *Ibid op cit* 20 October 1843

3 Governor-General to Secret Committee, 20 January 1843 BISL(1) Vol 28

4 *Ibid* 11 February, 1844, *op cit* Vol 29

5 Ellenborough to the Queen 19 Dehemeber 1843 *op cit*, 30/12 (28/11) Ellenborough to the Duke of Wellington 20 November, 1843 *op cit*

6 Hardinge to Ellenborough, 23 January, 1845-(EP)PRO 30/12 (21/7)

7 *Ibid* 20 February, 1845, *op cit*

longer than the Government"[1] Consequently, the supremacy of the Army functioning as State through its regimental committees was deemed as extremely dangerous "There being *no* hope *of* a civil government gaining ascendency over the Republican Army, so admirably organised for successful mutiny and the indulgence of licentious crimes"[2]

3 *Genesis of transformation*

And yet, notwithstanding the excitement of British statesmen in India, the genesis of the transformation of the Sikh Army into a republican force, should be examined Sher Singh's enthronement by it, in January 1841, had given a severe jolt to the civil administration The ineffective triumvirate had further demoralised it, and the sordid intrigues of the Sindhianwalas and the Jammu Dogras at the Court, brought about its ultimate downfall The Army, which had proclaimed a sovereign at Lahore discovered that neither the Maharaja nor the Darbar were capable of controlling it Factions at the Court frantically wooed it, and attempts were made to seek British intervention for its destruction The Army, therefore, took advantage of these demoralising conditions at the Court, and proceeded independently to punish the traitors and expel the foreigners from the State Civil and military disturbances having subsided late in 1841, it found a new unity of purpose Its newly acquired strength was based on a democratic upsurge and an aversion to foreign interference

4 The *Khalsa*

The virtual collapse of the civil authority and threat from foreign interference had, therefore, allowed the Army to assume a new status—the *Khalsa* or a representative body of the Sikh people and the State Its successful campaigns in the north and the south during 1941 44, had made it conscious of its strength It had no leader neither the sovereign nor the civil government was capable of swaying its latent energies Consequently, it turned away from them both and sought inspiration from the immortal ideals of Gobind Singh

> My own rule will I establish
> The four races shall be one,
> I will cause all to repeat the prayer of *Wah Guru*
> The Sikhs of Gobind shall bestride the horses, and bear hawks upon their hands,

1 *Ibid* 30 June 1845 *op cit*
2 *Ibid* 22 March 1845 *op cit*

The Turks who shall behold them shall fly,
One shall combat a *multitude*,
And the Sikh who thus perishes shall be blessed for ever.
At the door of o Sikh shall wait elephants caparisoned,
And horsemeo with spears, ond there shall he music over his gateway
When myriads of matches burn together,
Then shall the *Khalsa* conquer East and West
The *Khalsa* shall rule · none can resist.
The rebellious shall be destroyed, and the obedient shall have favours heaped upon them

5 Symbol of unity

The transformation of the Sikh Army was, therefore, both pheoomenal and spontaneous Fired by the ideals of Sikhism, it was a singularly democratic and secular phenomenon The assumption of power of the State by the *Khalsa* was symbolic . it was not an act of usurpatioo or a revolt against the civil aathority To the eommon Sikh soldier it appeared as a defensive measure against national disintegration and threat from foreign invasion. The new ideal of the mystic *Khalsa* or Commonwealth of Gobind appealed to him as he understood no politics It traosformed him iato a soldier of the Paoth, owakening his religious fervour aod patriotic zeal It opened up new vistas of glory aad eonquest before him as predicted by the last Guru for the generations to eome.

Thus was tranformed, the Army of Ranjit Siagh No political or religions leader guided its destiny, and uoder the eireumstaoces, it sought guidance from the Panthic political tradition—the *panjpiaras* or the Five Beloveds "The Guru will dwell with the *Khalsa* , be firm and faithful : wherever five Sikhs gather together, there will I also he present" The introduction of the panchayat system in the armed forces of the state is a singularly characteristic event in Sikh history. Each hattalion, each regiment and company selected its five trusted and loyal membors—"the Fives," thus acquiring a highly representative character. The regimental panchayats represented the army and the people, together they formed the Council—the supreme civil and military authority in the State. A powerful and systematic union took place io the direction of national affairs, which otherwise had completely deteriorated. This symbol of national unity and strength was apparent to the people as the *Khalsa* in the armed assemblies of their men and the regimeotal committees.

It is easy to understand the genesis of this transformation, which gave rise to the regimental committees By it no alteration took place in the structure of the Sikh State, nor was the basic character of the military system of Ranjit Singh affected in any way The efficiency and the fighting power of the armed forces also was not impaired In short, the new system had not sought to replace its nominal sovereign, though it had altered its relations with the State Crude in its composition, devoid of any set rules or determined modes of election except those which regulated the traditional village panchayats, it brought about a sense of self righteousness and a common bond of union for the welfare of the symbolic Commonwealth or the *Khalsa* Theoratically, individual regimental committees were independent and non-interfering in local matters, but when united in the Council, they could effectively direct the affairs of the State The Council had thus become, to a greater extent, the Supreme National Authority—a symbol of national solidarity and a guardian of the *Panth* and the people Its rigid military organisation generally kept it under discipline and subordinate to national interests It became the *Khalsa*, the *Sarbat Khalsa* and the *Gurmatta* combined, assuming the popular character of the whole nation, seeking advice and unanimity of council through its regimental committees

6 Pros and cons of republicanism

The vigour and resolution with which the army panchayats acted, surprised the British functionaries across the Sutlej They clearly observed that in time of stress, the Army could assume executive and judicial powers, procure donations, ordain exactions and impose fines to augment their resources Extremely distrustful of the British and those known to be pro British, it wrecked destruction on those whom it suspected of treason to the Commonwealth The Supreme Council met in emergencies to decide important issues. It could decide succession and proclaim a new sovereign, appoint Vaziers and dismiss them; declare war or peace, and keep the provincial satraps obedient Deliberations of the Council were often public, its decisions precise, and their execution firm and instantaneous

The republican character of the army of the Khalsa was, therefore, a symbol of national emergency. It had kept in tact the Sikh sovereignty and the nominal government By assuming the supreme civil and judicial authority in the State, it had merely compelled both its sovereign and the Darbar to become the servants of the *Khalsa* It is clear that the British could neither accept nor reconcile with this aspect of the

republican spirit of the Army From 1841 onwards, they had witnessed with concern the revival of warlike traditions hy it towards Afghanistan and Chinese Tartary in the north. It had curhed the amhitions of the Jammu rajas towards the Indus and Kashmir in 1841 During the next two years it destroyed both Dhian Singh and Suchet Singh, quelled the insurrections of the pretenders Kashmira Singh and Peshawara Singh, wiped out the Sindhianwala faction, proclaim Dalip Singh as Maharaja and Hira Singh as Vazier, imprison Jawahir Singh, and overrun Gilgit In 1844 45, the army panchayats had put to death Hira Singh and Pandit Jalla, hrought Gulah Singh to Lahore as a prisoner, appointed Jawahir Singh as Vazier and then condemn him to death, and chosen Lal Singh as Vazier and Tej Singh as Commander in Chief, hoth to lead them in war with the English

But though united through its regimental committees, there was no powerful mind to direct the energies of the army of the Khalsa Evils of republicanism sapped the functional resources of the State and created chronic imhalance in the administration The popular character of the army often led to military licence, and brought to surface, the conflicting opinions of the regimental committees , and the cross currents of court intrigues led to strong personal prejudices amongst its meinhers Though its rise was the result of moral force and emergency, yet as a supreme executive of the State, the *Khalsa* signally lacked political and administrative experience The rough and ready just ce administered hy the regimental committees was hoth effective and popular for a while, hut it led to judicial anarchy While the administration lacked any semhlance of cohesion and halance, its active military force had to remain aggressively vigilant—to destroy or get destroyed in the defence of the Commonwealth In these evils of republicanism was latent, the ultimate dissolution of hoth the *Khalsa*, and its regimental committees

7 British nervousness

In Ferhruary 1844, desertions from Sikh troops at Peshawar hecame noticeahle One regiment marched to Lahore against orders to extort more pay, and others threatened to follow suit Hira Singh had no power to punish them[1] Concentrations of large Sikh troops at Lahore, were disconcerting to the imhecile government of Hira Singh, who attempted their dispersal, hut the regimental committees disallowed it British officers at the frontier reported that "the mutinous Sikh Army' was in perfect control of the civil government, it had appopriated

1 Ellenborough to Duke of Wellington 16 February, 1844 (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/12)

to itself the state revenues, making an increase of pay as the price of of its adhesioo to the ruler[1] Comparisons were drawn aod attempts made to wean away the republican spirit of the soldeirs aod their adberence to the *Khalsa* "It is important to know what the Army thioks" Elleoborough wrote confidentially to his Agent at the N W Frootier, "and occasiooally be able to influeoce it They could be told that troops serving with us get their pay every month and peosion for tbeir families I want them to know, in sbort, how well we treat our soldiers that they may compare our conduct with that of tbe Khalsa"[2]

8 The Ferozepur Mutiny

A few mooths later, however, a few Indian regiments at Ferozepur on their way to Siod, mutinied, alleging that their allowances had been reduced[3] The Sikh soldiery across the border, watched with unconcealed glee the mutiny of the British sepoys A detacbment of Lahore army moved to Kasur, emissaries form Sikh troops arrived to encourage the mutineers, and Hira Singh was suspected of entertaining British deserters and discharged sepoys These allegations could not he proved with certainty, but the insubordination of British Indian troops almost in the presence of the Sikh army, was perilous[4] Ellenborough reported "These neighbours of ours are doing all they can do to induce our men to be disaffected The example of a mutinous army at Lahore extorting more pay from its nominal government, is more dangerous to us than its force in the field'[5] The incident, however, brought home to the Indian Goverooent that the malevolent spirit of the Sikh army would eventually lead to hostilities War with the Sikhs had, therefore, become inevitable It was hoped to defer it until British military preparatioos had been completed[6] Though the cause of the Ferozepur mutiny was later attributed to the incompeteocy of British officers of several corps, yet Hira Siogh was blamed "He is utterly reckless and unscrupulous, and would eross the Sutlej the moment he thought he

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1 Governor General to Secret Comm ttee 11 February 1844 BISL(I) Vol 29 para 3

2 Ellenborough to Richmond (Private) 14 February 1844 (EP) PRO 30/12-106

3 Another bundle in the *Ellenborough Papers*—(PRO 30/12 60) contains the private correspondence of Richmond and Abbott with the Governor General on the Fero epur Mutiny

4 Ellenborough to Wellington 20 March 1844 *op cit*

5 *Ibid* Ellenborough to the Queen 20 March 1844 *op cit*

6 Ellenborough to Wellington 21 April 1844 *op cit*

could do so safely We can only consider our relations with Lahore to be those of an armed truce "[1]

While the Sikh army flourished in anarchy and violence, Ellenborough wrote thus to the Duke "Our position with respect to the Punjab, can now be viewed in the light of an armed truce The contest whenever it may take place, must be on both sides and I must confess that when I look at the whole condition of our army, I had rather, if the contest cannot be further postponed, that it were at least postponed to November 1845 Let our policy be what it may, the contest must come at last, and the intervening time that may be given to us, should be employed in unostentatious but vigilant preparation "[2]

9 Transactions of Gulab Singh

In the hills, Gulab Singh had steadily increased his power He withheld the revenue of the districts he administered for the Lahore Government Out of 22 hill states belonging to Lahore, 11 had been swallowed up by him Since the occupation of Ladakh in 1836, he had been trying to seize the province of Kashmir [3] As Dogra policy tended towards the separation of the hills from the plains of the Punjab, Gulab Singh's rise to power was welcomed by the Indian Government 'The destruction of Soocheyt Singh," observed Ellenborough, 'has had the effect of entirely separating the Hills under Golab Singh, from the Plains still ruled in a manner by Hira Singh Everything is going on there as we could desire if we looked forward to the ultimate possession of the Punjab "[4] In June Gulab Singh expressed a desire to come to terms with the British Government in return for a recognition of his independent sovereignty in the hills [5] No positive encouragement, however, could be given to him [6] Having failed to secure British help, Gulab Singh continued to intrigue against the Lahore Government which produced a *jehad* in Muzzaffarabad and the other hill states bordering on Kashmir In a religious war, the insurgent Muslim peasantry overpowered several Sikh garrisons The Army panchayats took immediate action by summoning him to Lahore and declaring their intention of resuming the hill jagirs of the Jammu family Fearing that his ambitious schemes had created resentment in the Khalsa Army Gulab Singh

1 *Ibid* 20 April 1844 *op cit*
2 Ellenborough to Wellington 21 April 1844 (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/12)
3 Richmond's *Memoir on Jammu Rajas* (December 1843) (EP) PRO 30/12 60
4 Ellenborough to Wellington 9 May 1844 *op cit fol* 140b
5 Richmond to Government 3 June 1844 ISP(I) 13 July 1844 No 126
6 Government to Richmond 15 June 1844 ISP(I) 13 July 1844 No 127

tried to allay its suspicions He sent his son as a hostage to Lahore, and expediently made peace with his nephew. Richmond rightly observed, later on, that it was merely a hallow truce [1]

10 British war preparations

British military preparations for an eventual contest with the Sikhs, began late in 1843, when in the month of October, Ellenborough discussed with the Home Government the possibilities of a military occupation of the Punjab [2] Soon after, reinforcements of European and Indian infantry regiments began arriving at each of the frontier outposts of Ferozepur and Ludhiana Cavalry and artillery regiments moved up to Ambala and Kasauli Works were in the process of erection round the magazine at Ferozepur The fort of Ludhiana began to be fortified for defence Plans for the construction of bridges over the Markanda and the Ghaggar were made, and a new road link to join Meerut and Ambala was taken in hand Continued at a steady pace, these measures were well under way by the summer of 1844 Exclusive of the newly constructed cantonments of Kasauli, Sabathu and Simla, Ellenborough had been able to collect a force of 11,639 men and 48 guns at Ambala, Ferozepur and Ludhiana [3] In Sind, Napier's forces were considered adequate to make a demonstration against Multan if the Sikhs should cross the Sutlej [4] "Everywhere," wrote Ellenborough, "we are trying to get things in order and especially to strengthen and equip the artillery with which the fight will be."[5] Seventy boats of thirty-five tons each, with the necessary equipment to bridge the Sutlej at any point, were under construction; fifty-six pontoons were on their way from Bombay for use in Sind, and two steamers were being constructed to ply on the river Sutlej [6] "In November 1845," he informed the Duke of Wellington, "the army will be equal to any operation. I should be sorry to have it called into the field sooner."[7]

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1 Richmond to Government, 30 October, 1844 ISP(I) 23 November, 1844. No 103

2 Ellenborough to Wellington, 20 October, 1843- (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/12) *fol* 106 *ff*

3 *Ibid* 9 May, 1844- (EP) PRO *op cit*, *fol* 140 *ff*

4 *Ibid* 21 January 1844, *op cit*

5 *Ibid* 9 June, 1844 *op cit* Another bundle in the *Ellenborough Papers* (PRO 30/12 25/1) contains numerous lists of Army Movements towards the N W Frontier These papers include (No W 43), the formation of 3 *Corps d armee*, the Army of Exercise and the orders of the Governor General and the Commander in Chief regarding the disposition of the troops on the Sutlej frontier

6 *Ibid* 9 May, 1844 *op cit*

7 *Ibid*

Ellenborough's schemes for safeguarding the Sutlej frontier were rudely interrupted by his unceremonious recall in July 1844. A storm had been brewing at India House, and the Court of Directors had severely criticised his Indian administration, particularly his measures in Sagar and Bundelkhand, Gwalior and Sind. In his spirited reply to the charges framed against him by the Court of Directors, Ellenborough justified his policy on the grounds that it was essential in view of the impending struggle with the Sikhs. The annexation of Sind, he argued, had strengthened the weakest British frontier on the Sutlej[1] With regard to the 'insulated transaction' at Gwalior, he contended, that 30,000 mutinous troops of that state had been paralysing the movement of British troops and any delay in the removal of that army provided an inevitable inducement to the Sikhs to cross the Sutlej[2]

For various reasons, the Court's virulent charges against Lord Ellenborough did not include an open condemnation of his policy towards the Punjab In the first place, it was generally believed at India House that these military preparations were essential for the defence of the Sutlej frontier Secondly, Ellenborough had the support of the Duke of Wellington, whose despatches on Indian military affairs in 1842-43 had advocated to the Indian Government, the adoption of such measures for strengthening its position on the Sutlej[3] Consequently, Ellenborough hinted to the Duke on 26 May. "Personally, I should prefer going home, unless there should be a war in the Punjab"[4] In 1845, however, he complained to Hardinge regarding the Court's hostility towards him with regard to the Punjab "they would let you eat, what they would not let me touch, and think conquest of the Punjab so easy."[5]

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1 Ellenborough to Duke of Wellington 4 July, 1844-(EP) PRO 30/12 (28/12)

2. *Ibid* paras 35 and 41.

3 See generally- (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/13) in particular, Wellington's private correspondence with Lord Fitzgerald President of Board of Control Nos B 56g and B 59 on the subject

4 Ellenborough to Wellington, 26 May 1844, *op cit*

5 Ellenborough to Hardinge (Private) 5 April 1845- (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

CHAPTER XV
DRIFT TOWARDS HOSTILITIES, 1844—1845

1 Rise and fall of Jalla

Lord Hardinge, the new Governor General of India arrived at Calcutta on 23 July, 1844 At Lahore in the meanwhile, a new power had arisen Hira Singh s incompetency and his fear from Gulab Singh's enmity had given an opportunity to his family counsellor and tutor, Pandit Jalla to assume the entire control of the administration[1] Jalla was a clever Brahman who possessed the potentialities of a statesman, but he showed more craft than loyalty to the Jammu family, on whose favours he had risen to power For a while he proved to be a capable administrator. He handled the Sikh chiefs firmly and crushed the revolts in Hazara, the Derajat and Kashmir Measures were taken to strengthen Peshawar which was being threatened by the Afghans The governor of Multan was prevented from assuming an independent attitude[2] Jalla also aimed at crushing the power of Gulab Singh,[3] but his internal reforms, which aimed at purging the administration of inefficiency and corruption, made him extremely unpopular To enhance the revenues which had since dwindled to 10 000 000 rupees, and to meet the ever-increasing pay of the Sikh Army, now amounting to 12,500,000 rupees, Khalsa estates long in possession of the Sikh chiefs, were to be resumed by the State[4] By this step, Jalla alienated the support of Sikh nobility, whom he had begun treating with unconcealed contempt

While the policy of extortions alienated the Sardars, the revenue brought by it proved inadequate to pay the army—Jalla having raised the pay of the Sikh soldier to 14 ruppees—"exactly the double of a British sepoy"[5] Broadfoot reported on 17 January "The great Surdars, on the one hand, and the disciplined Army, or rather the *drilled* Army, on the other hand, suffice severally to swallow up the revenues Both together devour the country Pandit Jalla tried by his rigorous economy and punctual pay to keep the government going,

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1 Richmond to Government 23 August 1844 ISP(I) 21 September, 1844 No 118

2 *Ibid* 14 June 1844 ISP(I) 13 July, 1844 No 123

3 *Ibid* 10 October 1844 *op cit*

4 *Ibid* 10 and 20 December 1844 ISP(I) 4 April, 1844 Nos 14 and 44

5 Hardinge to Ellenbrough 8 January 1845. (EP)PRO 30/12 (21/7)

while he reduced both these formidable bodies, using the one against the other, but he left out of calculations, the mother of the nominal sovereign, and she was suffered in contempt to intrigue against him "[1]

Hira Singh became a mere puppet. The Sikh Government was carried on by Jalla in the name of Maharaja Dalip Singh Rani Jindan, the mother of the minor sovereign acted as regent A junior wife or concubine of Ranjit Singh, and an unknown figure till 1841, when the official Lahore Diarist and the British records take notice of her.[2] Succession of her son, however, raised her to the position of a *de jure* regent, thus, enabling her to play her destined role in Sikh history As the mother of the minor sovereign, she began to be designated as the *Mai* or Mother, and as the surviving widow of the great Maharaja, both the Court and the Army showed her deference Jindan treated with silent contempt the utter imbecility of Hira Singh but she raised her voice against the high handedness of the Jalla regime The claims of the pretender Peshawara Singh to the throne and Gulab Singh's tactics to support him, brought her out of the *zenana* The army panchayats came readily under her influence, and at the Court, her dissipated brother Jawahir Singh—an aspirant to the fatal office of *wazarat*, and a group of senior chiefs long in service of Ranjit Singh, supported her

In November, the power of the upstart Brahman began to weaken.[3] The Kashmir rebellion remained unchecked Muhammad Akbar Khan was combining with the Khyberis and the Yusafzais to attack Peshawar. Trouble was brewing at Multan[4] The army was getting restive and demanded to march against Gulab Singh, and the Sikh chiefs favoured

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1 Broadfoot to Ellenborough (Private) 17 January, 1845 (EP) PRO *op cit*

2 It is clear that Jindan was not one of the principal wives of the Maharaja and her own existence as well as that of her son Dalip Singh is unknown till 1843 when the army panchayats proclaimed the latter as their sovereign According to Osborne (*vide Journal* dated 12 July, 1839) all the four principal wives of Ranjit Singh had burnt themselves with his body at his death Of his sons—the official Diarist records the birth of Kharak Singh from a daughter of the Nikkia chief in 1802 From Mehtab Kaur of the Kanhaya *Misal* were born two sons in 1807—Sher Singh and Tara Singh whom the Maharaja did not recognise as legitimate Besides Ranjit Singh had two adopted sons—Kashmira Singh and Peshawara Singh probably so named to commemorate the conquest of these two provinces

3 Broadfoot to Government 14 November 1844 ISP(I) 28 December 1844 No 31

4 *Ibid* 10 December, 1844 ISP(I) 4 April 1845 No 14

tbe iostallation of Peshawara Singh, whnm the British had granted asylum at Amhala, as their Vazier[1] 20,000 Sikh troops were stationed at Lahore to give support to the government, whose diminishing revenues were precariously halanced by means of exactions, fines and coofiscations At first, the Sardars cnnspired tn drive away the imhecile minister and his despicahle minion from Labore Then they approached tbe Britisb Ageot for support The early reports of Major Broadfoot, who bad succeeded Col Richmond at the N W Frontier Agency in Novemher 1844, predicted disaster and the overthrow of Ranjit Singh's dynasty in tbe Punjab[2]

Hardinge was averse to giving any support to Jalla or his oppo nents Matters came tn a crisis when Jalla hegan confiscating the jagirs of the priocipal sardars and openly criticised the cooduct nf the raoi and her alleged paramour Lal Singh The rani aod her hrother Jawahir Singh demanded his banishment, and tbe sardars denounced the Dogra dominance On 21 Decemher, Hira Singh aod Pandit Jalla fled from Lahore, hut they were nvertaken hy the excited soldiery led hy Jawahir Singh, and put to death[3]

Immediately afterwards, everything appeared to he in confusion The rani and her hrother enhanced the pay nf the soldiery and it was expected that they would seek British help[4] Peshawara Singh stirred himself, and alarm was created that an English army was aceompanyiag him to Lahore But the pretender lacked courage and shraok from being proclaimed as the Maharaja, and the regiments which had declared for him, hegan tn use him "as a pump to drain the treasury"[5] Ultimately, the rani assumed cnntrnl of the governnient with the full approval of the panchayats, who boasted nf placiog her on the throne of Delhi![6]

2 Ascendancy of Jindan

The igoominious eclipse of the Jalla regime brought about the ascendancy of rani Jindan It was apparent that she had goaded the army to overthrow Hira Singh and install her brother Jawahir Singh as the Vazier But her son's position was still threateoed hy Peshawra

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1 *Ibid* 12 December 1844- ISP(I) *op cit* No 15

2 *Ibid* 11 and 14 November 1844 ISP(I) 28 De ember 1844 Nos 91 and 104, 10 December 1844 ISP(I) 4 April 1844 No 14

3 *Ibid* 23 and 24 December 1844 ISP(I) 4 April 1845 Nos 20 21

4 *Ibid* 1 January 1845 *op cit* No 47

5 Hardinge to Ellenborough 23 January 1845- (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

6 Broadfoot to Government, 6 January 1845- ISP(I) 4 April 1845 No 63.

Singh, who after one unsuccessful attempt to gain government, was preparing for another Soon afterwards, she proclaimed herself as regent, cast off her veil, and assumed all powers of the government in the name of her son The regimental committees acquiesced, for, she could represent a symbol of the sovereignty of the *Khalsa* Jindan would often address the common soldiers, and hold a court and transact in public the business of the State She reconstituted the Supreme Council by giving representation to the chief Sardars besides the army panchayat elected leaders—thus, effecting a temporary compromise between the republican army and the civil government "She seems to consider," commented Broadfoot, "courage the highest quality, and assuredly, without it, a man had better not try public life in the Punjab at present"[1]

3 Chastisement of Gulab Singh

It remained for the new government to crush the power of Gulab Singh The army panchayats met in Council, and notice was taken of his various usurpations, the recent revolt engineered by him in the hilly districts, his several overtures to the British, and his attempts to seize Kashmir He was accused as a traitor to the Panth A committee of 150 Delegates selected from the ranks, proceeded to Jammu to arraign him Gulab Singh received the Delegates humbly, he laid his sword and shield at their feet, and declared them, as the representatives of the Army, to be his masters[2] He promised donations to each panchayat and a contribution of 2,500,000 rupees to the Army For a week he entertained the Delegates, who in return promised to recommend him for the office of *wazarat* at Lahore

Meanwhile, a force *35 000* strong marched on Jammu The generals had orders form the panchayats not to interfere with the negotiations already started by the committee of Delegates Though alarmed, Gulab Singh kept his wits about him He naively admitted his treasonable activities and sent hypocritical assurances of allegiance to the Darbar, offered bribes to the Sikh chiefs and sent his jewels into British territory[3] As the army of retribution approached his capital, he made another offer of allegiance to the British,[4] and, receiving no response, he distributed his treasures freely to the Lahore commanders, and agreed to surrender the hilly districts usurped by him, together

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1 Broadfoot to Ellenborough 17 January 1845 (EP) PRO *op cit*
2 Hardinge to Ellenborough 8 March 1845 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)
3 *Ibid*
4 *Ibid* also 20 February 1845 (EP) PRO *op cit*

with a fine of 3,500 000 rupees In April 1845, the army returned to Lahore with the Dogra chief as a hostage Gulab Singh's humility saved him from certain death He agreed to pay the enhanced idemnity of 6,800 000 rupees, and gave a promise of good behaviour for the future On 14 May, the panchayats, with the approval of the regent, appointed Jawahir Singh as the Vazier and Gulab Singh returned to the safety of the hills, leaving the Army and the Court in a jubilant mood[1] His pride, not his ambition had been humbled

4 Supremacy of the *Khalsa*

Jawahir Singh, the new Vazier, was a drunkard and a half wit[2] For a while, the Sikh armies busied themselves in crushing revolts in Kashmir, Peshawar and Multan[3] The panchayats started enlisting men , the army which had been gradually reduced by Hira Singh began to be augmented by the rani and the panchayats Men flocked to Lahore to enlist themselves as the soldiers of the *Panth* The trans formation of the Army was completed The *Khalsa* it declared, was now supreme It would rule through the assembled regimental committees Gobind s ideal of the Sikh Commonwealth would be revived and the *Sarbat Khalsa* (Elect Congregation) would assume all executive, military and judicial authority[4]

These happenings created a stir at the British Agency at Ludhiana, which reported a further deterioration in the democratic revolution in the Army and anarchy in the Government The unholy alliance between the Darbar and the republican Army, Broadfoot reported, had not dissi pated the militant upsurge of the Khalsa or its power and energies This, he added was evidenced in the unceremonious chastisement of the all powerful Gulab Singh, the suppression of revolts everywhere, and the enlistment of large numbers of men in the army In addition to the panchayat of the army, 2 elected magistrates called the *chaudhris* for each company, were allowed to exercise great authority in local affairs[5] "The government,' bewailed the British Agent, "is a caricature , they have formed a Council, the leaders of the mutinous troops and a few of the old servants of the government there, debate every question with

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1 *Vide* Broadfoot s despatches of 18 March 5 and 24 May in particular in ISP(I)

2 Broadfoot to Government 5 and 10 August 1845- (PP) XXXI 1846

3 *Ib d* 16 January 1845 *op cit*

4 Governor General to Secret Committee 6 September 1845 BISL(I)

5 Broadfoot to Government 25 January 1845 ISP(I) 4 April 1845 No 111

the Ranee, a young and handsome womaa, behind a curtain, whence, she scolds them heartily '[1]

It hecame ohvious, that the new government at Lahore composed of the army panchayats and civil officers—designated hy Hardinge as "the dangerous military democracy of the panchayat system,"[2] was highly unwelcome to the British It had combined the various heterogeneous elements under the supremacy of the *Khalsa* Consequently a campaign of studied vilification poured out from the reports of British officials against the government and its functionaries, who had failed to hring about the expected anarchy and the break up in the Punjah The civil officers of the government, reported Broadfoot, were embezzling all they could The sardars were helpless amidst the confusion they had raised The soldiers were in a state of successful mutiny[3] The Sikh Gnvernmeat, charged Hardinge, lacked power to control the Army, which stood in daagerous proximity to the British frontier "No master miad," he eomplaiaed, "or a man of superior capacity appeared ia the Puajab to eontrol the mutinous army and reeonstruct the Gnvernment '[4]

5 Exercise in vilification

Ths new government of the Khalsa came under instant fire A catalogue of imaginary eonspiracies, and deplorably profilgate coaditioas prevalent at the Darhar, was drawn up The rani was deserihed as profilgate aad promiscuous ia her amours The Sikh Governmeat and the Darhar were depieted as virtually non existent aad in dire struggle with the army Except fnr the panchayats of the army, who indeceatly thrived ia military violence and aaarchy, there appeared no head of the State That these exaggerated statemeats were the result of fear from a premature collision with the resurgent Khalsa army, is proved beyond all doubt, hut their vituperative tenor bordering on unwarranted slander, has no moral justification

The youthful regent had shown considerahle energy and spirit, and Hardinge had unwittingly praised her for her regular life and devotion to the state affairs[5] Unlettered perhaps, and unfamiliar with the ways of public life, Jindan had conducted the business of the

1 Broadfoot to Ellenborough (Private) 17 January 1845- (EP)PRO 30/12 (21/7)

2 Hardinge to Ellenborough 8 March 1845 (EP) PRO *op cit*

3 Broadfoot to Ellenborough 17 January 1845 *at supra*

4 Governor General to Secret Committee 2 July 1845 BISL(I)

5 Governor General to Se ret Committee 6 November, 1845 BISL(I)

government with the courage and determination seldom shown by any woman in Sikh history She commanded the obedience of the regimental committees and the sardars, both of whom were represented in the Supreme Council of the *Khalsa* And yet, she had committed the unforgivable sin of a compromise with the Army She controlled the Government, Hardinge admitted, but she in turn, was governed by the Army[1] Broadfoot rolled the ball of insinuations "She has lovers and slaves, who of course bear their part so also the common soldiers, who attend the Durbar, and whom on one occasion the Ranee had come behind the curtain to address"[2] Hardinge took up the hint and kept it up both in his public despatches and private correspondence "The Ranee,' he wrote gleefully to his friends in England, "now reviews the troops unveiled and dressed as a dancing woman, which displeases the old but gratifies the young, but her irregularities are so monstrously indecent that the troops have held her horse and advised her to be more chaste or they would no longer style her the mother of all the Sikhs'[3] Writing afterwards to Sir John Hobhouse, he observed 'The Ranee is as profligate as ever—at festivals, she sends gifts to courtezans! Her days are spent in religious offices, her nights in the grossest debauchery At a public occasion recently, the wives of the Vazier abused her violently With considerable spirit she has not the decency to veil her continence The soldiery last year threatened to cut off her nose as a woman of bad morals, and this is the Regent of the largest Hindoo dynasty which remains in India!"[4]

For sheer vituperation, these scandal sheets remain unsurpassed, yet they fail to becloud the real issues at this time The Government of India had fully realised that Ellenborough's so called "armed truce," would end sooner or later, and that war with the Sikhs had become inevitable 'I imagine, we shall be forced to cross the Sutlej sooner or later," wrote Currie to Broadfoot, "and you will see that we are sending up troops to be ready for whatever may turn up"[5] Two months earlier, Broadfoot had warned the Government of India that all rational men in the Punjab feared a quarrel with the British, and in general, there existed a desire for war in the rank and file of the officers

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1 *Ibid*

2 Broadfoot to Ellenborough (Private) 17 January 1845 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

3 Hardinge to Ellenborough (Private), 23 October, 1845 (EP) PRO *op cit*

4 Hardinge to Hobhouse (Private), 19 September 1846 Broughton (BM) *Add* 36475 *fol* 25a

5 Currie to Broadfoot (Private) 19 January 1845 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

serving on the N. W. Frontier. However, a clash with the Army of the Khalsa, he observed, should be no half-measure. It was inevitable that the British armies should cross the Sutlej and march on the Punjab [1]

6 The expected "break up"

Though war with the Sikhs seemed inevitable, the means to persecute it successfully were still inadequate. The Government of India was, therefore, prepared to fight it on a political level till the military preparations, then in full swing, were completed *First*, was the fond hope that the civil part of the government at Lahore would be compelled to solicit British armed interference for the destruction of the resurgent Army In April Broadfoot reported that an influential member of the Sikh Government had suggested the introduction of a British subsidiary force and a resident at Lahore—in return, an offer of the Cis-Sutlej estates of the Lahore Goverament having been made [2] Two months later, he alleged that the rani would urge the troops to move against the English and force British interference, then disavow the acts of the troops and trust in a British restoration of her government after the destruction of the Sikh army[3] Hardinge had already written to Ellenborough: "She meditates flight to our side of the Sutlege, but is so weak, and has so many treacherous confidants, that the design is known, and if intercepted, will probably lose her life "[4]

Secondly, the Government of India believed in a possible break-up in the Punjab The extension of Dogra power in the hills would weaken the the Sikhs The possibility of the separation of the Jammu hills from the Punjab after Ranjit Singh's death, was first conceived by Lord Anckland when he met the Maharaja at Ferozepur in 1838 [5] Clerk had enlarged upon the idea, when he observed, that the Jammu family's endeavours to add Kashmir to their possessions, would lead to the dissolution of the Punjab Other British officials supported this view. Both Ventura and Court had also hinted at the possibility to Lord Ellenborough, but little notice of it was taken, because it would have jeopardized military operations in Afghanistan. Elllenborough, how-

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1 Broadfoot to Hardinge (Private), 18 November, 1844- (EP) PRO *op cit*

2. Broadfoot to Government, 7 April, 1845- ISP(I) 20 June 1845 No 56

3 Broadfoot's Report—Hardinge to Ellenborough, 3 June, 1845- (EP) PRO, *op cit*

4 *Ibid* 3 March, 1845-(EP)PRO *op. cit*

5 Auckland to Hobhouse, 9 December 1838 and 2 January 1839 Broughton (BM), 36473, *fol* 359 *ff*

ever, toyed with the idea in his numerous despatches to the Home Government On 22 April, 1843 he reported to the Duke that there was an expectation of a break-up in the Punjab [1] "The territories which formed the dominions of Runjeet Singh," he wrote on 18 December, "may be considered as already divided between the Sikhs of the plains and the Rajpoots of the hills "[2] The tendency of events, he observed in another private despatch, was to produce a separation of the government of the hills—the Sikhs retaining the plains and the Rajputs under Gulab Singh carving out a separate kingdom in the hills He added significantly " but it is impossible not to perceive that the ultimate tendency of late events at Lahore, is without any effort on our part, to bring the plains first, and at somewhat later period, the hills under our direct protection and control ' [3]

7 Myth of Dogra strength

Considerations of their military unpreparedness prevented the British from supporting Gulab Singh, yet, the suggestion gained further strength with their realisation of the military power of the Sikhs The extension of Gulab Singh's power continued to be interpreted in official circles as ultimately to effect a division of Ranjit Singh's dominions Hardinge, who finally adopted the idea as a positive instrument of British policy to weaken the Sikhs after the first Sikh War, found it impracticable, illusory and impossible of execution by Gulab Singh alone In the first place, he had little faith in Gulab Singh's military strength He considered him a shifty opportunist "steeped in crime."[4] His too frequent tender of allegiances were considered fictitious , and his boastful claims to hold Kashmir or the Punjab independently against the Army of Lahore, untenable [5] "If the (Lahore) troops can be prevailed upon to move against Gulab Singh," Hardinge correctly estimated, "I see no possibility of the latter being to do more than defend himself in the hills He has not the popularity , he may bribe the Sikh Surdars, but the troops detest him, and the petty hill rajas whom he has despoiled equally detest him I believe he has recently sent money and jewels to our bank of the river ' [6] Finally, Gulab Singh's utter humiliation in April 1846, when the army panchayats

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1 Ellenborough to Duke of Wellington 22 April 1843- (EP) PRO 30/12 (28/12)

2 *Ibid* 18 December 1843 *op cit*

3 Ellenborough to the Queen 19 September 1843-(EP)PRO 30/12 (28/11)

4 Hardinge to Ellenborough 3 June 1845-(EP)PRO 30/12 (21/7)

5 Currie to Broadfoot (Private) 19 January, 1845-(EP)PRO *op cit*

6 Hardinge to Ellenborough 23 January, 1845-(EP)PRO *op cit*

brought him as a prisoner to Lahore, shattered any further illusions about his capability of bringing about a separation of the hills and the plains in the Punjab

8 Whitehall s pressure

Though fondly cherished, these expectations—the solicitatation of British interference by the Sardars for the destruction of the Khalsa Army and Gulab Singh's occupation of Kashmir leading to an ultimate break-up in the Punjab, never materialised Nor did Hardinge seriously expect their fulfilment He exhibited strong resistance to pressure from Whitehall in February 1845 for an early passage of arms with the Sikhs The Sutlej, he insisted, was a highly preferable British frontier with a strong Sikh government as their advance guard upto Peshawar It was evident that no one could regain ascendancy over the army managed by the panchayats When the finances at Lahore failed, he observed cryptically " this Sikh people, or in other words, the Sikh army, will relapse into the rude state of their grandfathers from which they only emerged fifty years ago, and to which they will have no objection to return "[1] The bolstering up of a Sikh Government in power must, therefore, run its course The real danger, he however emphasised, was from the Army "But as regards the policy of this question, there could be no doubt that it is simpler, and a more decisive way of dealing with them, to cripple and subdue them as an Army "[2]

Notwithstanding these arguments, pressure from the Home Government for an invasion of the Punjab, continued It was pointed out that even if the Government of India desired to bolster up a weak Sikh government at Lahore, it should directly interfere in putting down the opposition of its mutinous army and destroying the hostile factions in the country Hardinge still resisted the temptation Self preservation, he admitted, might require the destruction of the Sikh army, but ' In the midst of this anarchy, you ask me why I am here ? The longer I stay here, the better our chances of keeping the Sikh government on its legs Even if we had a case of devouring our ally in his adversity, we are not ready, and we could not be ready until the hot winds set in, and the Sutlege becomes a torrent Moderation will do us no harm, if in the interval the hills and the plains weaken each other "

1 Hardinge to Ellenborough (Private) 8 March 1845 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

2 *Ibid*

Nor should it be forgotten, that the democratic revolution in the Khalsa Army was dreaded most by the military authorities in India Added to it was the fear of its repercussions on the Sikhs of the Cis-Sutlej region "We must be sure of their temper, before we leave them in the rear."[1] In the autumn of 1845, therefore, the Governor-General proceeded to the Upper Provinces to supervise the preparations for a war with the Sikhs "I go up on September 20," he observed cryptically, "every effort would be made to bolster up a Sikh government, and not to draw the sword"[2]

9 War preparations

Lord Hardinge had entered upon the duties of his office with a determination not to be unprepared for a war with the Sikhs The virulent temper of the Sikh army and its steadily increasing numbers, made it necessary that British military preparations should be adequate both for defensive and offensive war Reinforcements began to move towards the Sutlej The affable Col Richmond was replaced by the garrulous and warlike Major Broadfoot at the N W. Frontier Agency The headquarters of Lord Gough, the Commander-in Chief, were established at Ambala In October 1844, the British force on the frontier was 17,000 infantry and 60 guns Another 10,000 troops were to be ready by the end of November[3] In January 1845, when Sir John Littler took over the command at Ferozepur with a garrison strength of 7,000, the total defence forces on the frontier amounted to 20 000 men, and 60 guns "We can collect," observed Hardinge, "33,000 infantry, 6,000 cavalry and 100 guns in six weeks All the reinforcements have been taken from our extremities"[4] In March additional regiments from Barrackpur, Midnapur, Dinpur Behrampur, and the Saugor country were quietly moved up to Ferozepur, Ludhiana and Ambala There were 7 British regiments between Meerut and the Sutlej, the eighth at Agra, with 70 pieces of horse artillery and field batteries within the same distance—40,000 men for field service and 100 guns[5] Field batteries of 9 pounders with horses or bullocks to draw them, and 24 additional pieces of heavy ordinance were on their way to the frontier In addition, 600 elephants to draw the battering train of 24-pounder batteries had reached Agra, and 7,000 camels between Cawapur and the Sutlej were to move

1 Hardinge to Ellenborough 8 March, 1845- (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)
2 *Ibid* 18 August, 1845 (EP) PRO *op cit*
3 Hardinge to Ellenborough (Private) 22 October, 1844 (EP) PRO *op cit*
4 *Ibid* 23 January 1845 *op cit*
5 *Ibid* 8 March 1845 *op cit*

up in the summer to Ferozepur, which was to be the concentration point for any forward offensive movement.[1]

During the seventeen months, between Ellenborough's departure and the commencement of hostilities with the Sikhs, Hardinge had increased the garrison strength at Fernzepur from 4,596 men and 12 guns to 10,472 men and 24 guns ; at Ambala from 4,113 men and 24 guns to 12,972 men and 32 guns ; at Ludhiana from 3,030 men and 12 guns to 7,235 men and 12 guns, and at Meerut from 5,573 men and 18 guns to 9,844 men and 24 guns. The relative strength of the advanced armies, including those at the hill stations of Sabathu and Kasauli, was raised from 24,000 men and 66 guns to 45,500 men and 98 guns.[2]

10 Darbar's protest

. Movements of British troops towards the frontier could hardly be concealed from the Darbar, whose news-writers sent alarming reports from the Cis-Sutlej territory. The presence of the British Commander-in-Chief near the Sutlej, was viewed by the army panchayats with acute suspicion. Lord Gough's tour through a portion of Lahore territory in November 1844, had led to an exhibition of open repugnance by the Lahore authorities.[3] In January 1845, great excitement prevailed at Lahore because of a report that British troops were marching towards the frontier. A protest was lodged with the Agent at the N.W. Frontier Agency, who discovered that the army panchayats possessed detailed information about the military proceedings at the British headquarters.[4]

The Lahore remonstration was strong. The Sikh *vakil* told the British Agent that the Darbar was highly apprehensive of British military movements towards the Sutlej. The bulk of the Sikh army, he said, had been sent to the disturbed areas—Jammu, Kashmir and the country beyond the Jehlum. Broadfoot tried to convince him that the Darbar's allegations were based on false rumours and unreliable reports, that British military movements were defensive,

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1. *Ibid.* 2 July, 1845. *op. cit.*

2. These figures are based on official papers, particularly Hardinge's private correspondence on Punjab affairs with Ellenborough, *vide*, the *Ellenborough Papers* in the Public Record Office, London (No 30/12-21/7). Hardinge was unnecessarily blamed by the Home Government for inadequate military preparations for the first Sikh War.

3. Broadfoot to Government, 23 November, 1844. ISP(I) 1 April, 1845 No. 10.

4 *Ibid.* 16 January, 1845, *op. cit.* No. 102.

and that they had no desire tn interfere in the internal affairs of the Punjah [1] On the other hand, he alleged, that the army panchayats had decided to move large Sikh forces close to the frontier But these assurances did not satisfy the Darbar To the militant Sikhs, British movements did not appear as defensive , they were regarded as menacing in the extreme

11 The warlike flotilla

In February 1845, sixty boats huilt at Bomhay were conveyed to the Indus to serve as a river flotilla and as a bridge of hoats on the Sutlej Each hoat carried a gun, and the entire flotilta had the capaeity of moving 6,000 troops across the Sutlej in one trip [2] Its movement towards the fortified citadel of Ferozepur in June, with a separate Pontoon train, had the appearance of a wartike fleet On its arrival at Ferozepur, it was taken over hy the military authorities, and armed guards were placed sround it. Drilling and training of the men of the flotilla started on the hank of the Sutlej A survey for the location of the hridge was ordered and huildings required for the guard, stores and ammunitions, hegan to he constructed [3] Though secrecy was enjoined upon, it could hsrdly he maintained Ohjections raised hy the Sikhs were met hy pointing out to them that the fleet was a part of the Commissariat arrangements for carrying grain hetween Ferozepur and Sukkur [4] Broadfoot contended that since the Sutlej was an open highway, the British had as much right to use it as the Sikhs [5]

12 Intrigues of British officials

Political relations with the Darhar further deteriorated sfter the appointment of Major Broadfoot in Novemher 1844 as British Agent on the North-Western Frontier Hardinge did not like Richmond or his assistant, Cunningham "Richmond, I confess," he ohserved soon after his arrivat, "disappointed me; he hlows hot and cold and has no decided opinion" [6] Further, he suspected Richmond to be ptaying into the hands of Cunningham, who was too favourably

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1 *Ibid* 15 January, 1845- (PP) XXI, 1846

2 Government to Broadfoot 16 February, 1845 ISP(I) 20 June, 1845 No 94

3 Broadfoot to Government 17 June 1845 (Enclosure copy to C-in-C) and 18 June (copy from C-in C)—ISP(I) 4 July, 1845 Nos 75 and 78.

4 *Ibid* 4 June 1845- ISP(1) 20 June, 1845 No 92

5 *Ibid* 17 and 18 June 1845, *ut supra*

6 Hardinge to Ellenborough, 17 September 1844- (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

disposed towards the Sikhs "He is a perfect Sikh, but the Major will soon put our affairs to right".[1]

The new British political representative was a highly overstrung and impulsive official possessing neither Clerk's tact nor Richmond's soberiety His past conduct towards the Sikh soldiery, in the summer of 1841, while conveying Afghan royal families through the Punjab, was still remembered at Lahore His appointment at Ludhiana was looked upon with disfavour by the Darbar, which soon felt the impact of his hostile and overbearing manner Broadfoot had come to the frontier with a fixed idea that war with the Sikhs had been determined upon by the British In the conduct of political relations with the Darbar, he took extraordinarily bold measures, which were in line with Hardinge's policy Within a few weeks after his arrival, he elicited from Hardinge the cryptic approbation "Broadfoot is in his element on the frontier".[2]

Towards the end of 1844, Charles Napier, the Governor of Sind, demanded a free passage through Sikh territory, to chastise the predatory Baluchi tribes, who had committed atrocities in Sind Broadfoot, who was in direct communication with Dewan Mulraj, the Governor of Multan, on his differences with the Lahore Government, suggested that he should co-operate with Napier without reference to Lahore.[3] The Agent's correspondence with the Government of Sind also brought to light, that Broadfoot was trying to tamper with Mulraj's loyalty towards the State of Lahore.[4]

The Government of India disapproved of their Agent's suggestions.[5] Since the annexation of Sind in 1843, the Sikhs had considered the overflow of reinforcements into that country as the encirclement of their dominions in the south Napier's virulent measures against the Baluchis and the Bugtis in Upper Sind had caused commotion on the Sikh frontiers It was, therefore, mischievous to demand the co operation of the governor of Multan without the consent of the Lahore authorities in any movement of Napier's troops The Agent was further directed to abstain from holding any direct intercourse with the dependencies of

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1 *Ibid* 22 March 1845 *op cit*

2 *Ibid* 23 December 1844 (EP) PRO *op cit*

3 Broadfoot to Government 3 and 5 January 1845 ISP(I) 4 April 1845 (Enclosures Agent's correspondence with the Govt of Sind) Nos 53 and 7

4 Broadfoot to Government 27 December 1844 *op cit* No 35

5 Government to Broadfoot 13 January 1845- ISP(I) 4 April 1845 No 10

Lahore[1] Napier's measures against the Baluchis however, received the full support of the Multan authorities, but when a small Sikh police force crossed the undefined Lahore Sind border in pursuit of a few criminals part of a British regiment was moved to Kashmor near Rojhan by Napier to expel them This was resented at Lahore

Contrary to governmental directions, Broadfoot continued to encourage Mulraj In March 1845 he suggested to him the course he should adopt if his territories were invaded by the Sikhs[2] In November, he asserted that if war broke out with the English Mulraj would fight the Sikhs to save Sind[3] Similar matter came to light when in February 1845 both Nicholson and Cunningham, his political assistants, were found dabbling in the intrigues of the Punjab and Hardinge was inclined to remove them both from the frontier[4] In July, Nicholson was discovered intriguing with one Mulla Ahmad who had hinted that the Lahore governor of Kashmir and the rajas of Rajouri and Jhubbal—both Lahore dependencies were prepared to throw off the Sikh yoke and ally with the British Government[5] It was further discovered that both Richmond and Cunningham had been in clandestine correspondence with the governor of Kashmir Broadfoot, who was still in correspondence with Mulraj disclaimed any personal responsibility, but tried to shield his subordinates[6] These proceedings were highly reprehensible, and the Agent was directed to stop the disreputable intrigues of his political officers with the states subject to Lahore

13 Overtures of Gulab Singh

In January 1845, Gulab Singh proposed to cede the Lahore estates on the north of the Sutlej to the British, together with a payment of 5,000 000 rupees if recognised as the independent sovereign of Jammu and the neighbouring hill states[7] A month later, he agreed to aid the British with his hill levies if they attempted to take possession of the Punjab[8] The proposal was the outcome of the machinations of a French adventurer, Mons de St Armand—"a great scamp,"[9] who had

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1 *Ibid*

2 *Ibid* 19 March 1845- ISP(I) 20 June, 1845 No 26

3 *Ibid* 20 November 1845- ISP(I) 28 November 1845 No 184

4 Hardinge to Ellenborough 20 February, 1845 (EP) PRO 30 12 (21/7)

5 For the correspondence on the subject see Broadfoot's despatches in the ISP(I) 4 July, 1845 particularly Nos 93 and 110

6 *Vide* ISP(I) 20 June and 15 August- Nos 23 34 and 37

7 Broadfoot to Government 25 January 1845 ISP(I) 4 April 1845 No 111

8 *Ibid* 6 and 8 February 1845 *op cit* No 122 and 125

9 Hardinge to Ellenborough 23 February 1845 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

drifted into Jammu in search of employment Gulab Singh was duped into the belief that the Government of India desired to seize the Punjab and had offered his services [1] In August, Broadfoot received another proposal from the raja, who offered to destroy the Sikh army with 50,000 hill levies and facilitate the British occupation of Lahore [2] To these overtures there had been no British response Gulab Singh was told curtly that the British Government would not encourage a subject of an allied power to intrigue against his sovereign [3]

Proposals similar to these received from influential Darbar chiefs were also turned down, notwithstanding British political officers' exhortations to the contrary [4] Hardinge was disinclined to accept them because a premature intervention in the Punjab, on the supposed requests of these influential men of Lahore, would tantamount to hiring out British troops He said "My answer will be, not only that I will not interfere on such terms, but that if by acts of violent aggression, I am compelled to cross the Sutlege, I will do so without terms, giving them fair notice that they must take the consequences of throwing the first stone I assume they are prepared for a *limited* system of intervention Are they prepared for the *unlimited* consequences of compelling me to cross the Sutlege? "[5]

It is clear that Hardinge clung to his earlier conviction, that a policy of moderation should be followed till British military preparations were complete Withholding of support from the weak Sikh government would give the court factions and the army time to weaken each other, and ultimately, bring about the destruction of the Sikh power in the Punjab [6] "The Punjab," he remarked, 'must, however, be Sikh or British , and I see no elements out of which a Sikh government can possibly be constructed The delay is merely the postponement of the settlement of the question "[7]

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1 Broadfoot to Government 11 February 1845 ISP(I) 4 April 1845 (Enclosure Gulab Singh to Capt Mills) No 127

2 *Ibid* 25 August 1845 ISP(I) 25 October 1845 No 46

3 Government to Broadfoot, 10 September 1845 *op cit* No 48

4 Broadfoot to Government 7 January 1845 ISP(I) 4 April 1845 No 68 7 April, 1845- ISP(I) 20 June 1845 No 56 and 25 August 1845 ISP(I) 25 October 1845 No 46

5 Hardinge to Ellenbrough 8 March 1845 also 23 October 1845 (EP) PRO *op cit*

6 *Ibid* 23 January 1845 *op cit*

7 Hardinge to Broadfoot (Private) 11 September 1845 (EP) PRO *op cit*

14 Revolt of Peshawara Singh

Political events at Lahore were, however, marching towards a crisis In March, Peshawara Singh rebelled again Gulab Singh, who had encouraged him, fought shy of rendering him assistance when a Sikh force invested Sialkot, and compelled him to flee northwards[1] He raised an insurrection in the hills, and in July, he captured attock, made an offer of Peshawar to the Afghans and proclaimed himself the ruler of Sikhs[2] The news raised a minor storm at Calcutta The British authorities who had allowed Peshawara Singh to cross the Sutlej, felt disconcerted at his negotiations with Dost Muhammad His offer of Peshawar to the Afghans, was an act of desparation, but the town was of vital political and military importance , its surrender to the Afghans, would remove the ostensible Sikh barrier against Afghan encroachments in the N W Frontier Consequently, a stern warning was issued to the Darbar, that if the violent army panchayats deposed Maharaja Dalip Singh the Sikhs should not expect the British Government to recognise his successor[3]

Nothing, however, came out of Peshawara Singh's negotiations with the Afghans Chattar Singh, the governor of Hazara, was ordered to reduce him to submission After a nominal resistance, Peshawara Singh yielded on a promise of personal safety[4] While being conveyed to Lahore, Jawahir Singh caused him to be put to death[5]

15 Execution of Jawahir Singh

The assassination of Peshawara Singh proved fatal to Jawahir Singh The impetuous and arrogant Vazier, had proved himself both irresponsible and reckless during his 4 months' rule His public in ebriations and private debaucheries disgusted every one, and his behaviour violated all decorum A man of violent nature and addicted to erotic orgies, he openly flouted decent behaviour at all times Though the rani was quite fond of him yet, Jawahir Singh s enmity of her favourite Lal Singh made him extremely obnoxious[6] Unsuited to the

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1 Broadfoot to Government 24 May 1845 IPS(20) June 1845 No 64

2 *Ibid* 26 July 1845- ISP(I) 15 August 1845 No 56 Hardinge to Ellen borough 18 August 1845- (EP) PRO *op cit*

3 Hardinge to Ellenborough 8 March 1845 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

4 Broadfoot to Government 8 September 1845 ISP(I) 26 December 1845 No 96

5 *Ibid* 18 September 1845 ISP(I) *op cit* No 106

6 Broadfoot to the Secretary to Governor General (Private) 9 September 1845 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

office of *wazarat*, he was both inept and wild The army panchayats who had raised him to that fatal distinction deemed him unreliable and faithless To allay their suspicions, he boasted of leading them to victory against the hated foreigners across the frontier[1] The British also considered him a dissipated sycophant, likely to escape across the Sutlej at the first opportune moment[2] He was also suspected of sending emissaries across the frontier to corrupt British sepoys and to tamper with the loyalty of the Cis-Sutlej Sikh chiefs[3]

The wrath of the Army having been raised at the murder of the pretender, the Council of the Khalsa summoned Jawahir Singh on 21 September, to answer the charges of defiance of its orders The imprudent Vazier trembled for his life, he shut himself up in the fort, and after vainly attempting to win over the influential chiefs, declared that he would lead them to victory against the English Ultimately, he arrived before the assembled panchayats, seated on an elephant with the minor Maharaja by his side The *Khalsa* pronounced him a traitor to the Commonwealth, and condemned him to death He was executed by a firing squad on the spot[4]

The blood of the minister having momentarily assuaged the wrath of the Army, things calmed down a little and anti-British feeling subsided at the Court[5] Gulab Singh who had incited Peshawara Singh to revolt, was still hanging back[6] The widows of Jawahir Singh, who had committed sati, laid a significant curse on the Panth They prophesied that before the end of the year, the Punjab would cease to be independent and the Sikhs overpowered, that the wives of the Sikh soldiery would become widows and the country would become desolate[7]

16 Jindan becomes regent

Refusing to deal with the army panchayats, the British declared that there was no recognised head of the State Rani Jindan, the mother of the boy Dalip Singh, seemed to be the only person with determination

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1 Broadfoot to Government 15 September 1845 ISP(I) 20 December 1845 No 105

2 *Ibid* 18 June 1845 ISP(I) *op cit*

3 *Ibid*

4 Broadfoot to Government 26 September 1845 ISP(I) *op cit* No 115

5 Governor General to Secret Committee 23 October 1845 BISL(I)

6 Hardinge to Ellenborough (Private) 23 October 1845 (EP)I RO 30/12 (21/7)

7 Broadfoot to Government 26 September 1845 *ut supra*

and courage. The Army allowed her to take over the reins of the government as regent. The army panchayats having destroyed one minister, began to search for another. The position was offered to Gulab Singh, but he prudently declined to accept it. The ill-omened *wazarat*, therefore, remained vacant and the rani began showing energy and spirit by laying aside her veil and devoting herself to state affairs.[1]

All seemed well, except, that the Army had now assumed the title of the *Khalsa Panth* (Supreme Sikh Authority). It began to issue orders under its own seal to the regent, the military commanders, provincial governors and local officers. The Darbar was forbidden to make any communications with the British without its sanction.[2] This step was necessary for two reasons. In the first place, no satisfactory reply had been received from the British Agent concerning the movement of large bodies of British troops towards the Sutlej. Secondly, a serious problem had arisen because of Broadfoot's action in challenging the right of the Sikh Government to administer its Cis-Sutlej possessions. As the question is one of the principal causes of the Anglo-Sikh War, it deserves a closer examination.

17. Broadfoot's challenge

In March 1845, a minor violation of the North-Western frontier had taken place. A small body of Sikhs, escorted by a cavalry force, crossed the Sutlej near Harike, a little below the junction of that river with the Beas. The party, it appeared, was proceeding to Kot Kapura, a Lahore possession, for the purpose of relieving state forces stationed there.[3] Broadfoot, who was in camp at Zira, rushed to the spot, seized and disarmed their leaders, and sent them across the Sutlej. To the Government he reported, that the Sikhs had violated the frontier in order to test the strength of the British forces posted there. The Darbar disclaimed the violation,[4] but the British Agent challenged the right of the Lahore Government to send its civil and military officials to administer its Cis-Sutlej possessions.[5]

Fear of a premature collision with the Sikhs, elicited from the Government of India a disapproval of the use of force by their Agent,

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee, 6 November, 1845-BISL(I)
2 Broadfoot to Government, 27 September, 1845-ISP (I), *ut supra*
3 *Ibid* 27 March, 1845-ISP(I) 20 June, 1845. No 34
4. *Ibid*. 10 May, 1845- *op. cit.* No. 45.
5. *Ibid*. 8 April, 1845- op. cit. No. 46

hut it fully supported Broadfoot in what Hardinge termed "his first political campaign" against the State of Lahore The Cis-Sutlej estates of Lahore, yielding an annual revenne of over 2 000,000 rupees,[1] had heen administered hy the Sikhs since 1809 In April 1845, Broadfoot had prepared a case for the denial of this right to them, claiming that these territories were included in Ochterlony's Declaration of Protection to the Cis Sutlej states This extraodinary claim amounted to a virtual seizure of the Lahore possessions on the right bank of the Sutlej and was the major cause of the first Anglo-Sikh War The Agent's arguments,[2] hased on irrelevant documents dealing with the relations of the Government of India with the protected Sikh states, were accepted in *toto*[3] Sir Frederick Currie, the Foreign Secretary, had previously held them as private estates of Dalip Singh, liable to escheat on his death[4] After 36 years' of undisputed Lahore sovereignty over its Cis-Sutlej possessions, Broadfoot now advanced the extraordinary argument that if the Sutlej was a boundary between the Sikhs and the British, the former could not possess territories on the south of the river Immediately afterwnrds he began to tour the districts nnd judge local disputes The army panchayats and the Sikhs in general, considered these measures as acts of high bandedness on the part of the British Government

18 Anandpur Makhowal affair

Relations with Lahore consequently hecame seriously strained when a few months later, the Anandpur Makhowal affair took place The Colebrooke Award of 1828 had accepted Lahore supremacy over this town, which was managed by the Sodhi priests,[5] and the Darbar's right so established had never heen challenged A dispute having arisen among the Sodhis in the spring of 1845, Broadfoot took it upon himself to settle it hy force The British armed mediation was, however, upset hy the Lahore Government, whose troops expelled hoth the Amin and Lieut Cunningham sent there hy the Agent. This hold line of defiance surprised the Indian Government hy whom Broadfoot's action was considered moderate[6] "With regard to Lahore property on this side," Hardinge wrote, "the question is one of too insignificant character

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1 Richmond s (February 1844) *Statement of Lahore Territories South and East of the Sutlej* (EP)PRO 30/12 (60)

2 Broadfoot to Government 1 April 1845 ISP(I) 20 June 1845 No 35

3 Government to Broadfoot, 18 April 1845, *op cit* No 42

4 *Ibid* 20 March 1845 ISP(I) 4 April, 1845 No 150

5 Colebrooke to Murray, 19 December, 1828-(P) 28 326

6 Hardinge to Ellenborough 18 August 1845-(EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

to the Darbar officials, who were plotting to direct its energies against the British Government[1] Further steps were therefore taken to protect the Sutlej frontier On 24 November, Ludhiana and Ferozepur were strengthened Additional forces were moved from Meerut, Bareilly and Cawnpur[2] Two days earlier, it was learnt that three Sikh brigades were moving towards the Sutlej

21 The Sikhs cross the Sutlej

Matters were reaching a climax Both the English and the Sikhs began accusing each other of hostile intentions The Sikhs demanded from the English, the reasons for their military movements They insisted on the surrender of raja Suchet Singh's treasure, the restoration of the village Mowran and finally, a free passage of troops into the Cis Sutlej possessions of the Lahore Government[3] The British, on the other hand, maintained that the Sikhs should not complain of British military movements These were defensive measures , and that complaints of the regimental committees were a mere pretext for hostile proceedings On 20 November, it was reported that the whole Sikh army had been divided into 7 divisions One was to remain at Lahore, one was to proceed to Peshawar, and the remaining five were to proceed to Rupar, Ludhiana, Harike, Ferozepur and Sind[4] Two days earlier, Broadfoot had instructed the British *vakil* at Lahore to restrain the Darbar from sending its armies towards the Sutlej[5] The remonstrance having elicited no reply, the Lahore *vakil* was told that the silence of the Darbar showed his government's hostile intentions, which would not be allowed to be completed at leisure[6]

In general, the Darbar seemed to be indifferent to the war with the English[7] The army demanded that the regent and the boy Maharaja should march at its head Virulent professions of hatred against the English were the symbols of sincerity and popularity[8] Every one seemed reluctant to lead the armies Lal Singh hesitated to assume the command of his troops He complained that the war with the

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee 2 December, 1845 BISL(I)
2 Commander in Chief to Broadfoot 20 November 1845-(PP) XXXI 1846
3 Governor General to Secret Committee 2 December 1845 *op cit*
4 Broadfoot to Government 20 November 1845 ISP(1) 28 November 1845 No 184
5 Broadfoot to Rai Kishor Chand 18 November 1845 (PP)XXXI 1846
6 Governor General to Secret Committee 4 December 1845 BISL(I) No 16
7 Broadfoot to Government 20 November 1845-ISP(I) *ut supra*
8 *Ibid* 21 November, 1845 ISP(I) *op cit* No. 191

English would be ruinous and that the army was pushing him into it Consequently, he prepared to flee across the Sutlej [1] Tej Singh, the Commander in Chief, accused the rani of sending them to ceratin death [2] Gulab Singh remained aloof, hiding his time In November, he sent an emissary to Brigadier Wheeler at Ludhiana informing him that the army had decided on war He again offered his services against the Sikhs The rani and the chiefs who had goaded the army to cross the Sutlej, now stood mortified They had raised the storm, but were powerless to direct or allay it

On 2 December, Lord Hardinge arrived at Ambala He summarily dismissed the Lahore *vakil* until he should bring with him some explanation to the British remonstrance [3] On the 6th, he marched towards Ludhiana Two days later, the Ambala and Meerut forces were moved forward On the 11th they were still advancing towards the Sutlej

The same day, the Sikh army, in large numbers commenced crossing the Sutlej [4]

1 *Lahore Intelligence* 24 November 1845 (PP)XXXI 1846
2 *Ibid* 6 and 9 December 1845 *op cit*
3 Hardinge to Ellenborough 30 December 1845 (EP)PRO 30/12 (21/7)
4 Governor General to Secret Committee 31 December 1845 BISL(I)

Chapter XVI

WAR WITH THE ENGLISH, 1845—1846

1. Declaration of war

On 13 December 1845, the Governor-General issued a Declaration of War, charging the State of Lahore for a violation of the treaty of 1809 It justified British precautionary measures for the protection of the Sutlej frontier, which had become necessary on account of the disorganised state of the Lahore Government and its uncontrollable Army The Sikh Army, it accused, had without a shadow of provocation, invaded the British territories Consequently, the possessions of Maharaja Dalip Singh on the left bank of Sutlej, were declared confiscated and annexed to the British territories [1]

Military details of the first Anglo-Sikh War can be read more profitably in the official despatches of Hardinge and Gough,[2] the private letters of Hardinge to Ellenborough,[3] and to some extent, in the Papers presented to Parliament in the year 1846 [4] Of the contemporary accounts of the war, that of Cunningham[5] is considered too pro-Sikh, that of Lawrence too pro-British [6] Burton's official compilation suffers from the lack of a detached historical sense, but is otherwise full of details and figures [7] Gough and Innes' account is, probably, the most balanced [8]

2 The Sikh Army

For four days the Sikh army under Lal Singh and Tej Singh, poured across the Sutlej between Harike and Kasur Its five divisions—50,000 men and 108 guns, were assembled on the right bank of the Sutlej [9] It immediately proceeded to invest Ferozepur, the centre

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1 For the Governor General s Proclamation see Appendix No 11

2 *Despatches of Hardinge Gough and others etc* London, 1846

3 *Ellenborough Papers* in the Public Records Office London-30/12(21/7) these are supplemented by Lord Hardinge's private letters to Ripon and Hobhouse in the *Broughton Papers* in the British Museum MS 36475

4 (PP) XXXI 1846 XLI, 1847

5 *History of the Sikhs* Oxford 1918

6 *The Calcutta Review* xvi

7 *The First and Second Sikh Wars* Simla 1911

8 *The Sikhs and the Sikh Wars* London 1897

9 Governor-General to Secret Committee, 31 December, 1845 BISL(I) No 18

of steady British military concentration, where its commander, Major-General Littler, with 7,500 men and 35 heavy guns in position, was caught unawares Ferozepur was well fortified with thrown up shelter trenches and light fieldworks, but it was highly vulnerable Two divisions of the Sikh army took up positions at Ferozeshah, a village 10 miles above it, to intercept the main British army, moving up from Ambala for the relief of Ferozepur [1]

The Sikhs had violated the treaty and broken the peace, but not without sufficient provocations The hectic military preparations of the British across the Sutlej had compelled them to forestall their adversary from taking an initiative And yet, the swift action taken by the Sikhs completely surprised the British military leaders congregating at Ambala, the headquarters of the Commander in Chief For long, the Army of Lahore had been held in contempt and branded as licentious, and its violent republican character held a negative force Its errant militant temper was believed to expend itself on depredations and violations it could produce anarchy and dissolution rather than wars [2]

3 British complacencies

Steady British military buildup on the Sutlej, had neither suffered from slackness nor dilatoriness, but it is almost beyond belief, that an invasion by large Sikh armies on British territories had been discounted by almost all the British political officers—Broadfoot, Lawrence, Nicholson and Cunningham, and believed so by their commanders Broadfoot had unwittingly fed his Government dubious intelligence received from his unreliable secret agents at Lahore News of the movement of the Sikh army was received by him on 20 November, but he disbelieved it, and did not transmit the information to military headquarters at Ambala [3] Intelligence that the Khalsa Council had decided the movement of troops across the Sutlej, reached him the following day, but he withheld it, and reported that the Darbar astrologers had declared the moment inauspicious No chief, he observed, seemed to stir from his house, and that the Khalsa troops, after receiving their pay, were deserting to their villages [4] He believed that the Sikhs would

1 Hardinge to Ellenborough (Private) 30 December, 1845 (EP)PRO 30/12 (21/7)

2 Richmond and Broadfoot emphasise this view See particularly Broadfoot to Government, 20 and 21 November 1845 Governor General to Secret Committee 2 4 and 31 December 1845 BISL(I)

3 *Lahore News Letter* 18 November, 1845 Broadfoot to C in C 20 November 1845-(HD)

4 *Ibid* also Secret Letter of 4 December, 1845 *ut supra*

invite collision with the British with utmost reluctance, and that if they did, it would be a tame affair, leading to the dispersal of their army and the subversion of their state [1]

Added to this belief was the British disregard of the vigorous discipline and the fighting qualities of the individual soldier of the Khalsa The pronounced determination and faith of the disciples of Gobind, though vaguely known, was treated by them with unconcealed derision Intelligence reports from the capital of the Sikhs confirmed that many a soldier of Govind had vowed undying fidelity to the Commonwealth at Ranjit Singh's funerary temple, and that he had sworn to die or drive away the *firangees* from its frontiers This dedication of the common soldier towards the *Khalsa* and his will to die for it, was neither felt nor realised—a fact, which later surprised the British and made them alter their opinion about "the rabble of the Sikh army'

4 Troop dispositions

Therefore, though actively preparing for a war, the British military authorities were caught napping Their military strategy and army dispositions were both erroneous because of a conviction that large scale offensive operations by the Sikhs were impossible Hence a forward movement towards the 100 mile open Sutlej frontier by the forces stationed at Ludhiana, Ambala, Sirhind and Meerut, was considered unnecessary [2] Also the difficulty of anticipating the point at which the army of the Punjab would meditate a sudden irruption, prevented the concentration of forward offensive forces at more than two points—Ferozepur and Ludhiana [3]

At Fernzepur was stationed under Major General Littler, a force 7,500 strong—1 European regiment, 7 regiments of Native Infantry, 2 regiments of Native Cavalry, 24 pieces of light field artillery and 35 heavy guns mounted in position, in addition to heavy ordnance Seventy-seven miles eastwards, at Ludhiana, 5,000 men and 12 guns were under the command of Brigadier Wheeler [4] At Amhala, seventy-six miles south east of Ludhiana and one hundred and six miles from Ferozepur,

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee, 4 and 31 December, 1845 BISL(I)

2 Broadfoot to C in C 20 November 1845 (HD) Governor General to Secret Committee 31 December 1845 BSIL (I) No 18

3 (HD), p 132-33

4 Commander-in Chief to Governor-General, 19 December 1845-(PP) XXXI, 1846

was another division of 7,500 men and 36 guns under Major-General Gilbert Additional European regiments within an easy approach, numbering over 3,000 men and a few guns, were stationed at Simla, Sabathu, Kasauli and Dehra Dun At Meerut, one hundred and thirty miles distant, was another force of 9,000 men and 26 guns These were the main dispositions of the Army of the Sutlej, additional reserve forces in the rear were stationed beyond Meerut, at Delhi and Cawnpur

On 9 December, Nicholson reported from Ferozepur that a portion of the Sikh army had approached within three miles of the river. Broadfoot categorically contradicted the information, and pointed to the impossibility of the Sikh armies crossing the Sutlej[1] Two days later, the news that the Sikhs had crossed the Sutlej, startled the British Army headquarters at Ambala The sudden awakening that instead of sporadic depredatory aggression, there loomed large a prospect of war with the republican army, led to military movements and combinations of the most difficult kind Gough, realised at once the vulnerable position of Ferozepur, whose encirclement by the Sikhs was dangerous An imminent attack on it, would not only isolate Littler's force, but also lead to the capture of the proposed Pontoon bridge and the 60 gun-boats so preciously assembled on the river near Ferozepur The loss of Ferozepur, therefore, would jeopardize the entire British military strategy on the Sutlej

The realisation of this danger, however, put the British military commanders on their finest mettle Troops from stations in the Ambala, Sirhind and the hill districts were directed to move by forced marches to Busseean The main portion of the garrison force at Ludhiana under Wheeler was withdrawn and ordered to join the Army of the Sutlej The strength of the British force so combined amounted to two divisions—over 11,500 men and 48 guns It covered 150 miles in six days and on 17 December, after a harassing march, it reached Busseean From this central position both Ludhiana and Ferozepur could be supported simultaneously, but a Sikh force was reported to be advancing towards it This forced Gough to move forward, and after by passing Wadni, the British forces arrived the next day at Mudki, a village about 20 miles south-east of Ferozepur

5 Drift and indecision

The Sikhs had crossed the Sutlej with 5 divisions, each 8,000-12,000

1 Governor General to Secret Committee 31 December 1845, *op cit*

strong They had adequate knowledge of tbe British dispositions at Ambala, Ludbiana and Ferozepur Their strategy appeared to he a forward movenment 2 divisions were to invest Ferozepur, 1 division was to advance on Ludhiana, aod 2 divisioos were to remaio at Ferozeshah to meet the advanciog British force Hesitatioo and irresolution however, marred Sikh military operatioos Having encir cled Ferozepur in a hold sweepiog move, they dispersed their armies in a 22 mile wide semi circle, strechiog from Harike to Mudki 10 miles io the south , and thence, to Ferozeshah, 10 miles further in the south east A divisioo was precipitately ordered to advance towards Ludhiaoa, which oow had no garrisoo While Ferozepur lay isolated, the Sikh commanders were significantly inactive Its siege was tardy and half-hearted, but its reduction was neither aimed nor attempted It was evident, that the dispersal of Sikh armies in a wider defensive arc, had not reduced the forces necessary for storming Ferozepur Lal Singh's army had entrenched itself at Ferozeshah, Sham Singh Attariwala remained at Harike with one division, aod Tej Singh s two divisions hovered around Ferozepur, whose reduction would have made both the hattles of Mudki and Ferozeshah redundant

That Ferozepur was left unscathed, wheo its imminent reduction would have turned the scales of war, exhibited the hesitant military strategy of the Sikhs throughout the operations of the Sutlej The Army of the Khalsa had crossed the river borne on a crest-wave of popular enthusiasm , in discipline and equipmeot, it was equally matched if not superior to the British force, widely dispersed on three separate points Its soldiers had the will and determination to fight or die, but oot so its inept commaoders Both Tej Singh and Lal Singh showed irresolution, and each seemed to act as he thought best There was neither a unity of commaod, nor a well coordinated plan of offensive action No master mind planned or directed the destiny of the *Khalsa*, which had, oo a sudden impulse, released a formidable force across the Sutlej No swift forward action could he planned Drift and iodecision therefore, marked the course adopted by its irresolute commanders

6 Battle of unequal numbers

Meanwhile, the Army of the Sutlej advancing towards Ferozepur, converged on Mudki, 10 miles from the Sikh entrenchments at Feroze-shah For once, the Sikh commanders acted in unison and decided to intercept it Leaving behind their main force, a division of the Sikh army was hastily drawn and haphazardly formed out of the detachments

taken from various regiments at Ferozesbah—3,500 cavalry, 2,000 foot and 20 guns The plan was neither bold nor well conceived, and the means to execute it, were found inadequate

As soon as the British army encamped in front of Mudki, the Sikh division appeared at a distance of two miles, advancing in order of battle. Mudki was a battle of unequal numbers The Army of the Sutlej comprised of 12,000 men with the 48 guns and 4 troops of horse artillery, compared to the Sikh force of 3,500 cavalry, 2,000 infantry and 20 guns Grossly exaggerated estimate of the strength of the Sikh force—15,000-20,000 men and the same number of cavalry and 40 guns, as given in Gough's despatch from the battlefied, cannot he accepted.[1] The Sikhs attacked immediately. The British horse artillery and cavalry were immediately pushed forward on the dead flat country dotted with thick jhow jungle. Two divisions of infantry supported by field batteries moved forward. Though outnumbered, the Sikhs fought with a series of dogged stands and skirmishing retreats In the fierce encounter, the stubborn resistance offered by them over sandy hillocks, was unexpected ; but the battle was lost, and the Sikhs were repulsed with a loss of 15 guns[2] The British casualties were 872—215 killed, among them were Sir Robert Sale, the defender of Jalalabad and Major-General Sir John M'Caskill

7 Advance on Ferozeshah

At Mudki, for the first time, the fierceful audacity and reckless abandon of the Sikh soldiers surprised their English adversaries. The victorious British general, having dispersed the Sikhs, allowed them to retreat Littler was ordered on 20 December to move out of Ferozepur with his force, and join the Army of the Sutlej four miles from the Sikh entrenchments. Next day Gough marched across the country, keeping at a distance of four miles from the Sikh positions. At Ferozeshah, a small village ten miles from Mudki, lay sprawled in a crescent-shaped arc, two of the finest divisions of the Sikh army, over 10,000 strong Beyond Ferozeshah, midway between that village and Harike, two divisions of Sikh artillery and cavalry under Tej Singh,

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1. Commander in-Chief to Governor-General Camp Moodkee, 19 December, 1845- (PP) XXXI, 1846

2 *Return of Ordnance Captured from the Sikh Army at the Battle of Moodkee*, 18 December, 1845 (HD) The number of guns captured (15) confirms the strength of Sikh force mentioned above Also it belies the assertion that at Mudki, the Sikhs had a formidable force superior to the British in number, described later by Sir Robert Peel in the House of Commons as "treble the amount of the Army of the Sutlej."

kept an uneasy vigil over the hesieged garrison at Ferozepur Gough's despatch of 22 December from the battefield, magnifies the strength of the Sikh force at Ferozeshah to 46,808 men and 89 guns, exclusive of their cavalry force Hardinge's despatch to the Secret Committee further magnifies these figures to 48,000-60,000 men nnd 103 guns [1] With these numbers of their adversaries firmly entrenched at Ferozeshah, and harring their passage to Ferozepur, it is douhtful, if the British would have won the hattle

In this battle, the Sikhs had to pay the price of the folly of their inept commanders The eitadel of Ferozepur had not heen reduced, and the armies under Lal Singh and Tej Singh pulled in different directions Tej Singh still harred the entrance to Ferozepur, when Littler played a ruse Having planted a small force in the north east, in front of the Sikh army, he slipped out of the fort from the southeasternly direction with nll his men nnd guns On 21 December, he effected Junction with the left flank of the British army—thus the Sikh entrenchments were now encircled on three sides Even after the escape of Littler s force, Tej Singh did ahsolutely nothing to eut its retreat, or storm the fort

8 Battle of Ferozeshah

The junction hnving heen formed with Littler's garrison in the afternoon Gough decided upon a frontal attack The force under his command, which now stood hefore Ferozeshah, inclusive of the Ludhiana nnd Ferozepur garrisons, amounted to 16,700 men of all arms, nnd 69 guns [2] The Sikh entrenchments at Ferozeshah were quite formidahle, but here too, the British official despatches exaggerate the numbers of the Sikh forces defending them [3] The entrenchments consisted of strong hreastworks, in the from of a parallelogram guarded hy 100 guns of heavy calihre in fixed batteries Behind the guns were deep lines of Sikh infantry The British order of the hattle consisted of a manoeuvre to tbe right of the entrenchments, facing Ferozepur

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1 For details of these exaggerated numbers *vide* the despatches referred to These figures were further enhanced to 60 000 men and 150 guns see particularly Peel s account (HD) Governor General s *Notification* issued from Ferozepur on 25 De cmber and *General Orders* of 30 December 1845 (PP)XXXI 1846

2 Governor General to Secret Committee 31 December 1845 BISL(I) No 18

3 Gough s Despatch 22 December 1845 Governor General to Secret Committee 31 D cember 1845 *op cit*

and the open country covered with low juogle Littler s and Gilbert's divisions were deployed into line the 9 pounder batteries and 8 inch howitzers were in the centre, and horse artillery on either flank The secood line was formed by Smith's cavalry force, with a brigade in reserve to cover the wings Sir Henry Hardinge who had gallantly offered his services under the Commander in Chief, commanded the left wing , while General Hugh Gough conducted the right wing

At half past three in the afternoon all was set The Sikhs opened up a heavy cannonade from their well fortified positions, and kept up a steady fire A frontal attack had been ordered on the Sikh breastworks, for, the British artillery was of smaller calibre and had proved quite ineffective Masses of men and regiments of infantry were hurled simultaneously in the contest for the Sikh positions But the Sikh guns told their superior calibre and artillerymen their better markmanship 1/3rd of British guns were put out of action before darkness fell, and waves of British infantrymen were mowed down by the Khalsa musketeers arrayed stolidly behind their guns For once, the generals of the Peninsula and Waterloo fame[1] found their military skill put to the hardest test in one of the most fiercely contested battles ever fought in India The utter recklessness of the British assault was equally matched by the sheer audacity and stoic unconcern of the soldiers of the *Khalsa* Amidst the storm of shot and shell were intermingled fearful Khalsa yells and war cries, aod the battle raged in full intensity for three hours British infantrymeo threw themselves heroically on Sikh guns, but when the partially wrested batteries were within their grasp, the deadly fire of the musketry from the Sikh infantrymen, cut them down, and only a portion of entrenchments could be carried While the conflict was raging in a blinding fury of dust aod smoke, darkness crept over the battlefield, and the English lines were thrown into the wildest confusion

9 ' A night of terrors

Cunningham, an eye witness at Ferozeshah records the memorable scene ' men of all regiments were mixed together , generals were doubtful of the fact or of the extent of their own success, and colonels knew not what had become of the regiments they command ed, or of the army of which they formed a part ' [2] On the dogged

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1 Compared to the inept Sikh commanders almost all the British generals at Ferozeshah—Gough Hardinge Smith Dick Sale M Caskill Thackwell Cureton and Taylor, had served in the Peninsula under the Duke of Wellington

2 *History of the Sikhs* p 266

resistaoce offered hy the Sikhs, he comments "The resistaoce met with was wholly unexpected, and all started with astonishmeot Guns were dismouoted, and their ammunition was blown into the air, squadroos were checked in mid career, battalion after battalion was hurled hack with shattered ranks, and it was not after sunset that portioos of enemy positioo were fioally carried"[1] It was "a night of terrors" for the British soldiers, and Gough's frontal attack had precipitately hurled them ioto the mouth of Sikh guos The situation is described thus hy aoother eye witoess "half outside and half within the enemy's position, unable either to advance or retreat Regiments were mixed up with regiments, and officers with men, in the wildest coofusion"[2]

That fateful night, the Sikhs remained firmly entrenched and in possession of the greater part of the entrenchments Regiments of British troops intermingled with them in the darkness Men utterly exhausted aod famished, eodeavoured to keep possession of some of their hardly won positioos At midnight, the Sikhs advanced one of their heavy ordnance and played with deadly effect upoo the scattered British troops H M 80th foot and 1st European Infantry under Hardinge, counter-attacked and captured the gun[3] Then for a while, there was an ominous silence, but during the whole night, the Sikh artillery continued to shell British troops whenever moonlight disclosed their position[4]

Before daylight on 22 December, British infantry had reformed their shattered lines Its flanks were supported by horse artillery, and the heavy guns placed in the centre, were aided hy a flight of rockets At dawn, the British 9 pounders opened up The Sikh hatteries played with great effect, dismounting British guns and hlowing up their tumbrils Then the left wing under Hardinge, and the right wing under Gough, made the final and fearful assault, then charged the British cavalry battalions, sweeping the camp with untold frenzy, hearing down all opposition aod dislodging the Sikhs from the whole position, and then were the Sikhs driven out of the village of Ferozeshah

Thus hy sheer gallantry and the weight of the entire Army of the Sutlej the hattle had heen won, but the extent of British loss shocked public opinion hoth in India and nt home Lord Hardinge made the exclamatioo "another such victory and we are undone!" The severely mauled Sikh army was in full retreat across the Sutlej hy 10 o'clock

1 *Ibid*
2. *Life of Lord Lawrence* p 186
3 Hardinge to Commander in Chief, 22 December 1845 (HD)
4 Gough s Despatch, 22 December, 1845 (PP) XXXI 1846

The British general collected his hattered foree men were utterly tired and famished, half the guns were out of action and without any ammuntion British casualties were 2415—130 officers killed in action, among them being Major Brnadfont, the Governor-General's Agent at the N W Frontier Ageney [1] The Sikhs suffered an estimated loss nf 4,000 5,000 men and 73 guns

10 Tej Singh s cowardice

Suddenly, as the sun arose, the second Sikh army under Tej Singh in full hattle array and hattalions after hattalions nf cavalry appeared hefore the wrecked hattlefield The British general describes this fnrce as "hattalions of large field artillery supported by 30,000 *Ghorepurras* !"[2] The second army of the Khalsa had arrived at the most opportune time The victors of Ferozeshah were eompletely exhausted their soldiers were dropping for want of sleep and were hungry, there was no reserve at hand, no reinforcements in sight, and their last ammunltion had already been fired Tej Singh's advance had virtually eut their retreat to Ferozepur The victory so dearly gained at dawn appeared to have heen lost Stark reality of destruetion nt the hands of this fnrmidahle force, hrought on this oecasion, the finest qualities of British military skill and eourage The exeitement of victory had given place to a deadly ealm, but there was no dismay or ennsternation in the British eamp The lessons of the hardihood and determination of the Sikh soldiers in the battlefield had been learnt, and the wearied generals and their exhausted hattalions readily agreed to faee the grim prospeet of a seeond hattle

Tej Singh's force drove straight in British cavalry lines Simultaneously, a eombination nf infantry and artillery eharged the left British flank under Littler During this manoeuvre, Tej Singh maintained an incessant fire, whilst the British artillery completely short of ammunition, was unable tn answer him with a single shot [3] Frnm the centre of the war torn village of Ferozeshah, the British generals ordered their exhausted cavalry divisions to advance and receive the onslaught The three divisions of infantry prepared to march wearily in support As the mass slaughter was about to hegin, suddenly, Tej Singh's guns ceased to fire, and he seemed to abandon

1 *Return of the Killed and Wounded of the Army of the Sutlej* 21 22 December 1845 (HD)

2 Cnmmander in Chief to Governor General 22 December 1845 (PP) XXXI 1846

3 *Ibid*

the field The advancing British columns watched in utter amazement and disbelief, and their generals ordered an immediate retreat to Ferozepur

It is positive, that Tej Singh's force, which appeared that fateful day in the shattered battlefield of Ferozeshah, would have utterly annihilated the Army of the Sutlej if its commander had shown determination and courage [1] The cowardly leader of second army of the Khalsa witnessed the Brititsh army in full retreat towards Ferozepur, but did not stop it, or pursue it or give battle He hesitated, opened fire again with a feeble cannonade, and then to everybody's surprise, hastily disappeared The retreating British force was thus mercifully left unharmed, and their generals heaved a sigh of relief

11 Lessons of Ferozeshah

Chance or the cowardice of Tej Singh therefore, completed the partial British success at Ferozeshah but the erroneous impressions gained by its military leaders about the fighting power of the republican army, led to a sober revision It was found that the Sikh artillery was better equipped and manned , that its ordnance possessed much superior calibre to the British 9 pounder batteries [2] The qualities of the fighting men of the Khalsa army wrung from the British soldiers and statesmen alike, a grudging respect Ferozesbah had its reverberations throughout India Prayers and thanksgivings for the survival of the British soldiers were offered throughout the Empire In the House of Commons, both Peel and Wellington mourned the enormous loss, but referred with pride and satisfaction to the conduct of the most difficult operations by their worthy commanders [3] The Army of the Sutlej reported the Commander in Chief, had safely retreated to Ferozepur, but had sustained heavy losses , it was short of men, food, ammunition

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1 This opinion is shared even by British writers see for instance Gough and Innes (p 37) It would even seem that if they had shown the same capacity for attack as for defence if Tej Singh had known what o do with his fresh army at Ferozeshah the frontier force with the Governor General and the Commander in Chief might have been crushed on December 22nd

2 The *Return of Ordnance* (HD p 36) The ordnance captured at Ferozeshah told the staggering truth that the Sikh entrenchments were defended by 21 guns of high calibre ranging from 10 to 47 pounders 20 9 pounder batteries 24 pounder mortars and 32 8 pounder batteries Compared to this the Army of the Sutlej had 4 9 pounder batteries 6 troops of horse artillery and numerous 8-inch bowitzers

3. (HD) p 128, 137 140

and heavy guns. Material damage suffered by it, necessitated immediate relief, which should be immediately summoned from Delhi.[1]

12 Situation at Lahore

Soon after Ferozeshah, everything seemed to go wrong at the Darbar Deprived of the major portion of their heavy artillery, the main body of the Khalsa army had crossed the Sutlej. It re-assembled on the left bank of the river near Harike But its soldiers were still proud and unbeaten, though led by irresolute commanders, who after listening to their cries for vengeance, had hastened towards the capital. At Lahore, the regimental committees were still powerful The regent summoned the Supreme Council, which met in an atmosphere of hushed calm the weather-cock compromise between the army and the civil government, which now hung in balance, appeared to have acquired a further lease of life

Gloom was writ large on the deliberations of this last Council of the *Khalsa*. An atmosphere of tense irresolution and of an impending disaster prevailed The rani and the sardars were in a state of indecison, and the commanders of the lost battles hung their heads in shame Lal Singh pointed out the ultimate consequences of continuing the war with the English Disaster, he said, would overtake them all, and hastily, he offered to relinquish his office Tej Singh, the Commander-in-Chief, wailed that they had none of the old leaders left, and that the Army knew that there was certain death before them. Fakir Nur-ud-Din and Diwan Dina Nath shook their grey heads and counselled the Darbar to adopt a policy of moderation The civil part of the Council quailed at the prospect of war and its consequences, and with a fingure of guilt, pointed towards ultimate defeat and disgrace.

But the leaders of the republican army were flushed and angry They appealed to the regent—the mother of all the Sikhs Led by Sardar Chattar Singh, Sham Singh Attariwala, Sher Singh and Ranjor Singh Majithia, they upbraided the commanders and the chiefs, who in dire peril had forgotten the ideals of Gobind Singh The *Khalsa*, they pointed out, was the custodian of the State and the people, it was immortal and could not be defeated by the hated *firangees* The disciples of Gobind would prefer death to the disgrace of surrender to the enemies of the Commonwealth

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1 Commander in Chief to Governor General 22 December, 1845 (PP) XXXI, 1846

Thus the spirited leaders of the republican army defied surrender and defeat, and carried a resolution of continuing the war with the *English* Lal Singh was relieved of his burdensome office, and it was decided to summon Gulab Singh to Lahore and nominate him as Vazier. No change in the military command deemed feasible, and both the inept commanders were re appointed to conduct further military operations The Army thus decided the fate of the Sikh State "There can, of course, be no guarantee for the security of our territories ' reported Hardinge soon after to the Secret Committee, "till this Army is broken up and reduced to a state of obedience and subordination, which can only be effected by actual coercion by us ' [1] Earnest entreaties having been made to Gulab Singh, he arrived at the capital on 27 December, surrounded by five regiments of picked hill troops The Dogra chief disclaimed any responsibility for the war but the army leaders in their eagerness to leave for the battlefield, installed him as the Vazier [2]

13 Gulab Singh s perfidy

The nomination of Gulab Singh as the Vazier of the State of Lahore at this juncture by the Army, was a fatal mistake He had many a score to settle with the *Khalsa*, the Army and the Darbar and had bided his time The assumption of power by him enabled him to destroy his enemies Summoned in their adversity by the Darbar to give unity and cohesion to the Sikh government, he applied his energies just in the opposite direction—aiming at the destruction of the army and the dissolution of the State He plainly told the Darbar that their conduct towards the British Government was unjustifiable, that he had taken no part in it, and had in no way compromised himself Immediately afterwards, he put himself in direct communication with the English, and the Governor General began to receive from him messages of loyalty and assurances of the furtherance of British aims The Sikh army, Gulab Singh reported, though shaken and disorganised after recent reverses, was still a force to reckon with It was beyond his control—and unless it was broken up by force or strategem, he would not gaurantee peace [3]

To the British, Gulab Singh's appointment was highly welcome Hardinge praised his wisdom and prudence for having kept himself aloof from the hostilities of the Sikhs, and urged him to coerce or disband the army and warn its leaders that their acts would be disavowed both

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1 Governor General to Se ret Comm ttee 19 January 1846 BIS' (I)
2 *Ibid* 3 January, 1846 *op cit* No 2
3 *Ibid*

hy the sovereign and the Darhar[1] Thus a calculated process of treachery and demoralisation was set in motion by the new Vazier at the Darbar.

14 Skirmish of Baddowal

Meanwhile, the Sikh armies re crossed the Sutlej, and a division of Sikh force under Ranjor Singh Majithia seriously threatend Ludhiana Gough was at Ferozepur, expecting the arrival of direly needed reinforcements The news was disconcerting, and he at once ordered Harry Smith's division to proceed immediately towards Ludhiana On 20 January, Smith's force reached Jagraon 25 miles from Ludhiana Intelligence was received hy him that the Sikh force under Ranjor Singh, having heen joined hy the raja of Ladwa, had reached Baddowal, 18 miles away Ludhiana, was now in imminent danger, and to save it, Smith made a *de tour* to the right, and in doing so, he came into contact with the moving columns of the Sikh force A skirmish followed, hut the British general refused to give battle, and hastily retreated The Sikhs opened fire on the retiring force, and an ineffective charge of cavalry was ordered by the British commander to protect the main hody of troops, which had reached the outskirts of the town In the skirmish, 69 men were killed, 68 wounded and 77 taken prisoner from the retreating British force

15 Battle of Aliwal

Ludhiana was thus saved, but the Sikhs claimed a victory at Buddowal On 22 January, Ranjor Singh leaving that place secured the passage of the Sutlej, and large Sikh reinforcements joined him, swelling his force to 15,000 men The British general immediately occupied the evacuated village of Baddowal, and the timely arrival of reinforcements from Ferozepur, made him act at once Ranjor Singh's objective was to seize Jagraon, and to reach Gungrana, from which place he could threaten the direct British line of communications A large British convoy with reinforcements, provisions and heavy guns was then moving towards the Sutlej Threat of its interception promp ted Harry Smith to engage the Sikh army as early as possihle

On 28 January, he moved ont of Baddowal with 11,000 men, and reaching the outskirts of Bundri, surprised the Sikh columns which lay spread like an octopus at Aliwal The British cavalry made the initial charge under cover of an artillery harrage The Sikhs were caught unawares Their hastily dug trenches proved ineffective, and their

1 *Ibid* 19 February, 1846 *op cit* No 6

guns had no cover Successive cavalry onslaughts broke their ranks, and Ranjor Singh fled across the Sutlej leaving his army leaderless Then the reckless slaughter of the Sikhs began, in which 3,500 men were killed and 67 guns were lost, the British casualties being 589, with *15 killed* [1]

Aliwal was a signal victory for the British, but a storm was gathering at Sohraon north of Ferozepur 30,000 soldiers of the Khalsa with 67 pieces of heavy artillery and over 200 light swivel guns, had re crossed the Sutlej over which a bridge of boats had been constructed [2] A *tete de pont* had been thrown in front of it with the finest military skill The Sikh armies had entrenched themselves firmly on the left bank of the Sutlej under the command of Tej Singh The main cavalry battalions and the dreaded *ghorcharas* under Lal Singh were stationed across the river beyond Harike, a few miles to the right of the Khalsa encampment

16 Gulab Singh s treachery

The news of the Sikh reverse at Aliwal had further emboldened Gulab Singh to persecute his nefarious designs He threatened the Darbar chiefs with the dire consequences of their action and made them stand in mortal fear for their lives But the army leaders were away, and those who remained at Lahore demanded his expulsion It was, however, too late The rani and the Darbar having been won over by Dogra cunning stood demoralised and reluctantly they acquiesced in what he did A secret understanding was arrived at between Gulab Singh and the British that the Darbar would openly disavow the acts of the Army, and that Maharaja Dalip Singh would be allowed to retain his nominal sovereignty provided the British forces were allowed to occupy the capital of the Sikhs unopposed [3]

Thus with ignominious treachery and deceit were sold the lives of the valiant soldiers of the Khalsa by their Vazier, and thus was fought the battle of Sohraon It is clear that Gulab Singh's perfidy was known to the chiefs of the Darbar, and perhaps the commanders who led the army, had an inkling of it, but the soldiers and the

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1 For deta ls of the action at Al wal *vide* Harry Smith s Despatch 30 *January 1846* and *Gough s Despatch* 1 February 1846 (PP) XXXI 1846

2 British estimate of rhe Sikh army at Sobraon—46 676 men seems highly exaggerated *vide* Gough s Despatch 13 February 1846 *ut supra*

3 Hardinge to Sir George Arthur (Private) 10 February 1846 Hardinge to Ellenborough 19 February 1846 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

the regimental committees at Sobraon had no knowledge of it The cooduct of Lal Singh aod Tej Siogh during the course of operations, cannot he explained otberwise

17 Sikh positions at Sobraon

Across the river, on the right bank of the Sutlej the Sikhs had established a military camp They had placed their heavy guos in front commanding and flanking their field works across the river The formidable eotrenchments proved that the soldiers of the Khalsa had dug themselves io to die British army ohservers recoonoitring on the river, reported to the headquarters of the Army of the Sutlej at Nabalke, that the main body of the Army of the Khalsa some 30,000 35,000 stroog had crossed the bridge of hoats over the river A 2½ mile wide bridgehead deftly covering it, cresceot-shaped and constructed with coosumate skill, was protected by heavy field guos Trenches had beeo dug, parapets thrown and obstacles placed in front of the left flaok, covered by 200 light swivel gun emplacements Over 70 guns were placed behind well constructed batteries of earth, plank or fascines Infantry troops in a deep treble line of trenches, were covered either by redoubts or epaulments , the field works were eoclosed on all sides, and side works of batteries protected them from flanking fires All these propartions were watched and reported to the headquarters of the British army encamped at Ferozepur [1]

The defensive positioo of the Sikhs at Sobraon was therefore, stroog but as at Ferozeshah, the Sikh military strategy was modelled oo a defeosive pattern—a combination of artillery and infantry within a strongly fortified position But artillery battalions and the dreaded *ghorcharas* under Lal Singh were kept away from the battlefield at a distance of two miles from the Harike ford across the Sutlej The commaoders who had plaon-d and perfected the works had oeither the vision oor the drive to force a forward movement

18 An interval of destiny

The battle of Sohraoo is ooe of the most memorable battles in Sikh history Though elated hy the victory at Aliwal, Lord Gough found himself unprepared to launch an immediate attack until Harry Smith's force could join him, and the siege train and ammunition arrived from Delhi [2] The Army of the Sutlej had heen regrouped , hut it still

1 Commander in Chief to Governor General 13 February 1846- (HD)

2 Military details of the battle of Sobraon are given in Gough s D.spatch 13 February 1846 (PP) XXXI 1846 Governor General to Secret Committee 13 February 1846 BISL (I) No 6 Hardinge to Sir George Arthur (Private) 10

lacked food and forage, it had no ammunition and few heavy guns Two brigades had been despatched to reinforce Harry Smith's division at Baddowal The convoy of mercy and hope was still out of sight At this critical time, Cunningham describes the British position thus "The British sepoys glanced furtively at one another, or looked towards the east, their home, and the brows of Englishmen themselves grew darker as they thought of struggles rather than triumphs The Governor-General and the Commander in Chief trembled for the safety of that siege train and convoy of ammunition, so necessary to the efficiency of an army which they had launched in haste against aggressors and received back shattered by the shock of opposing arms The leader of the beaten brigades saw before him a tarnished name after the labours of a life, nor was he met by many encouraging hopes of rapid retribution' [1]

For thirteen days between the momentous interval of Aliwal and Sobraon, while the Army of the Sutlej lay in an emaciated and hapless state the Sikh commanders did not launch an offensive They remained signally inactive, diverting their energies and resources towards the concentration of strength behind the deeply dug entrenchments Lessons learnt at Ferozeshah had been forgotten, and lack of a concerted plan of offensive action, had deprived them of the opportunity of destroying an enemy held at bay There is no evidence that the inertia exhibited by Tej Singh and Lal Singh, was the outcome of cowardice or treachery, the rank and file of the army of the Khalsa appeared confident of the invulnerability of their great work at Sobraon But both the commanders were haunted by an unknown fear—the uncertainty of their own position at Lahore, where an old and unscrupulous enemy was in power It is, however, positive that a planned attack on Ferozepur and on the *sorely shrunken Army of the Sutlej at this time, would have destroyed* the British force under Lord Gough. Victory in a war is not a matter of chance the irresolute commanders let an interval of destiny pass

19 Battle of Sobraon

Meanwhile on 8 February, Major General Harry Smith's division rejoined Lord Gough s army The same day, the fateful convoy of men, ammunition, stores and heavy guns arrived from Delhi The sight of heavy ordnance—20 pounders drawn by elephants, and a siege train

February 1846 and Hardinge to Ellenborough 19 February 1846 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

1 *Op cit* p 274.

gladdened the hearts of soldiers and generals alike. The British general took two days to prepare for battle On 10 February, the mortars and heavy guns were massed within good range of the advanced Sikh posts of Kandiwala and Little Sobraon The battering and disposable field artillery having been put in position in an extended semi-circle, embraced within its fire the Sikh entrenchments

Lord Gough now gave the order of battle The British dispositions in front of the Khalsa entrenchments were in the shape of a 6 mile wide horse shoe About a mile from the *tete de pont*, on the extreme left, Dick's divison faced the extreme right of the Sikh position In the centre was placed Gilbert s division, flanked on both sides with heavy artillery Towards the left, was deployed Harry Smith's division at the village of Guttah The cavalry brigades under Cureton covered the Harike ford, beyond which, on the opposite bank, were eocamped Sikh cavalry battalions under Lal Singh Campbell's horse artillery troops took an immediate position to the rear, between Gilbert's right and Harry Smith's left The rest of the cavalry brigades under Thackwell were held in reserve on the left [1]

A heavy mist hung over the plain and the river At day break, as the fog lifted, British batteries opened up over Little Sobraon The Sikh guns replied with telling effect, and the cannonade lasted for over two and a half hours By nine o'clock it became clear that neither the Sikh guns could be silenced, nor the Sikh troops, covered within the treble line of trenches, dislodged The issue could only be decided by the arbitment of musketry and bayonet A direct assault on the Sikh positions was, therefore, ordered.

The first attack was begun by Stacy's brigade supported on either flank by Fordyce's batteries and Lane's horse artillery Successive attempts by horse artillery to take up positions at the gallop, proved of no avail, the infantry men moved towards the entrenchments by inches in the face of hot fire of cannon, musketry and zumboorucks kept up by the Khalsa troops, but were finally repulsed A second assault was made soon after by Ashburn's brigade, which failed to dislodge the Sikhs from the area of their encampment Then towards noon, both Gilbert's divison from the centre, and Harry Smith's brigades from the right, were thrown out under cover of artillery The British

1 Gough s Despatch 13 February, 1845- (PP) XXXI 1846 Governor-General to Secret Committee 19 February, 1846-BISL(I) No 6

general describes the memorable scene "As these attacks of the centre and right commenced, the fire of our heavy guns had first to be directed to the right, and then gradually to cease, but at one time, the thunder of full 120 pieces of ordnance reverberated in this mighty combat through the valley of the Sutlej" It became apparent that the two brigades that had passed the trenches, would bear the brunt of Sikh attacks and demonstrations The battle raged with inconceivable fury from right to left The Sikhs, even when at particular points their entrenchments were mastered with bayonet, strove to regain them by the fiercest conflict, sword in hand

In this battle the experience of Ferozeshah was repeated The Sikhs had no cavalry, and Thackwell's two cavalry brigades and H M 3rd Light Dragoons under White, now moved forward and rode through the openings in the intrenchments made by sappers, in single file As at Ferozeshah, they charged and overcame the obstinate resistance of the defenders of batteries Not until the full weight of three divisions of infantry, and every field gun had been cast into scale, that the British could win the battle

Tej Singh, the Sikh Commander in Chief, had fled soon after the first assault He had either by accident or design, sunk a boat in the middle of the bridge, and had cut off Sikh retreat Sham Singh Attari wala had taken over the command, and had rallied the soldiers of Gobind not to give up, but die for the *Khasla* Lal Singh, and his cavalry force were no where to be seen He had taken the road to Lahore.

Forsaken thus by their commanders, the soldiers of the Khalsa were left to their own resources In the fierce struggle, while they stood face to face with death, Cunningham rightly observes "the soldiers did everything and their leaders nothing', and in the ultimate outcome "no Sikh offered to submit, and no disciple of Gobind asked for quarter'[1] Thus was the battle of Sobraon lost and won The British casualties were 2403, including amongst killed Sir Robert Dick, 'a gallant veteran of the Peninsula and Waterloo" The Sikhs had 3,125 men killed in action, among them being Sham Singh Attariwala Sixty seven pieces of connon, and upwards of 200 camel swivels and vast amount of ammunition of war, fell into British hands

1 p 280, 284.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BEGINNING OF THE END, 1846—1847

1. An assessment of the war

Though the Sikhs had lost the war, they had fought stubbornly. After Mudki and Ferozeshah Hardinge wrote : "The republican army has more vigour and resolution in it than any with which we have yet had to contend."[1] After Aliwal and Sobraon, he reported to the Secret Committee, that in the course of these operations, the Sikhs had brought into field warlike resources of a more perfect system of military organisation than any to which the British arms had heretofore been opposed.[2] The British had won the war at an enormous cost, yet the soldier-statesman gave the Khalsa soldiery its due: "the Sikh soldiers are the finest men I have seen in Asia, bold and daring republicans."[3]

The republican Army failed to win the war, because its conduct was left in the hands of incompetent commanders, who could neither plan nor direct the operations against an adversary notoriously imperialist. Lack of positive leadership, therefore, and not of courage on the part of its soldiers, was the main cause of the defeat of the Sikhs. The assertion that the Sikhs lost the war because of the treachery of their commanders Lal Singh and Tej Singh, is equally exaggerated, if not wholly unfounded. Tej Singh's inaction after Ferozeshah, should be attributed to a tactical blunder or cowardice and not to treachery.[4] Lal Singh, it is alleged, was in communication with Nicholson and Lawrence. Before the battle of Mudki, he is said to have proposed to Nicholson that for a consideration, he was prepared to hold back his forces for two days from joining up with the Infantry.[5] It is further alleged, that he had sent a sketch of the entrenchments at Sobraon to Lawrence.

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1. Hardinge to Ellenborough, 30 December, 1845- (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7).
2. Governor-General to Secret Committee, 19 February, 1846- BISL(I). No. 6.
3. Hardinge to Ellenborough, 20 April, 1847- (EP) *op. cit.*
4. Ferozeshah is a pointer in this direction. Yet, the evidence of such inaction in the depatches of the Governor-General (Secret Letter, 31 December), Gough's despatch from the battlefield (22 December) and Hardinge's private letter (30 December) points to lack of planned co-ordination and unity in the Sikh military command, rather than to treachery.
5. Nicholson's *Journal*- (P) 169.2.

His inaction and disappearaoce at Sobraon is also significant Cooclusive evideoce io support of tbese allegations, bowever, is lacking Public and Secret despatches of the Goveromeot of India, particularly Gough's despatcbes and Hardinge s private papers—tbe latter refer witb staggering fraokness to worse transactions, as for iostaoce, the opeo and avowed treachery of Gulab Singb—do not contain any reference to the supposed overtures made eitber by Lal Siogh or Tej Singb Sucb overtures, if made, were hardly taken notice of by the Britisb Considering the British military preparations and the resources at their command, tbe claim, that but for the treachery of their leaders, tbe Sikhs would have heen able to retaio the Punjab as ao independent state, after enteriog into war with tbe British, also seems quite inadmissible

2 The final betrayal

Aliwal and Sobraon bad coovinced the Darbar that their army was beaten Gulab Singb was now master of tbe situatioo So far he bad played bis game well As a general commading two divisions of the Sikb army, and a feudatory vassal of tbe Lahore Governmeot, be had defied the orders of the Darbar aod sent evasive answers, when after Mudki aod Ferozeshab, he was ordered to reioforce tbe Sikb armies oo tbe Sutlej [1] After Aliwal, oo more pressing iovitatioos by tbe Darbar, be reluctaotly arrived, to be ultimately oominated as the Vazier of the State of Lahore Since that time be had been io direct communicatioo witb the British authorities, assuring tbem of his loyalty and supplyiog tbem informatioo He was prepared to act as a British agent for the subversioo of the State, and the dispersal of the Sikh armies, io returo for a Britisb recognition of his iodepeodent sovereignty in the hills , and be persistently demanded a reward for bis treachery Henry Lawrence had given him a written assurance on behalf of tbe Britisb Governmeot, that bis interests would be taken into consideration after the termination of hostilities [2] Before the battle of Sobraon was fought, the ground for rewarding Gulab Singh—"the only man who had oot lifted up his arm against us," had been prepared by Hardinge It became obvious to him, that the territorial power of the Sikbs could be weakened by rendering Gulab Singh independent He was assured, that his services would be rewarded in a manner, which would render his territories independent of Lahore [3] On 16 February, he proposed to Lord Ripon,

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1 Hardinge to Ellenborough 7 June 1846. (EP) PRO 30/12(21/7)

2. *Ibid*

3 Governor General to Secret Committee 19 February 1846 BISL(1) No 6

the President of the Board, that the encouragement of Gulab Singh, who had done good service, had been recognised even before he became n Vazier of the Lahore Government, nnd that, it would weaken the warlike Sikh republic if his territories could be separated from those of the Sikhs [1] Thus it is clear, that the mode of the reward to be offered to Gulab Singh for his treachery to the Sikhs, had been indicated to him and the Home Government

The Sikh defeat at Sobraon made Gulab Singh act promptly In uprighteous indignation, he upbraided the rani and the Darbar to admit their folly and save the country from ruin All his hatred of the army came to surface The army, he told them, had been the cause of their undoing Its arrogance and violence, which had nearly exterminated him, depriving him of his possessions, power and prestige, would now also destroy them. Unless it was disbanded and dispersed, it would lead the Sikh State to extinction They should now confess their crimes, and beg mercy from the British So far as he was concerned, he pointed out, he had taken no part in the war, and was on the best of terms with the British He could now effect a settlement with them, which could probably save the Sikh government and their sovereign [2]

The rani and the chiefs stood aghast at these accusations There was confusion and consternation at the Darbar. The demoralised army leaders gathered around Gulab Singh Overawed by the skillful knavery of their Vazier, the rani and the chiefs signed a Declaration on 15 February, signifying to abide by whatever terms Gulab Singh might determine on with the English [3]

Armed, thus, with unlimited powers to determine the fate of Ranjit Singh's kingdom, and surrounded by his Muslim battalions. Gulab Singh arrived at the Governor-General's Camp at Kasur, the same day. The remnants of the Khalsa army under Lal Singh and Tej Singh, some 20,000 strong, were kept at a safer distance A group of moderate Darbar ministers including Diwan Dina Nath and Faqir Nur ud Din, accompained the Vazier, ready to accept in the name of Maharaja Dalip Singh, such terms as the Governor-General might dictate [4]

The Darbar Delegation was received by Hardinge with the correct

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1 Hardinge to Lord Ripon, 16 February 1846 (Secret)—(EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

2 Governor-General to Secret Committee 19 February, 1846 *ut supra*

3 *Ibid*

4 Hardinge to Ellenborough 19 February, 1846 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)

solemnity of a soldier statesman Deprecating the injurious conduct of the Sikh nation, he praised the prudence of its treacherous Vazier, for having kept himself aloof from those who had committed the crime of war Gulab Singh, he said could alone settle their affairs with the English, because he had not taken part against them He was the only fit and proper person to save the Sikhs from the impending destruction [1] Cunningham, who attended on Lord Hardinge as an *aide-de-camp* at Kasur, observes that Gulab Singh suddenly perplexed the Governor General by asking what *he* was to get for all he had done to bring about a speedy peace, and to render the Sikh army an easy prey[2] Lord Hardinge, however, dismissed the Delegation, and they remained in conference with Frederick Currie and Henry Lawrence the greater part of the night, and agreed to all that had been demanded [3]

On 18 February, the young Maharaja was brought to the Governor-General's Camp at Kasur for the ratification of the treaty Gulab Singh suggested that the Maharaja should not be allowed to return to the rani, intimating plainly, that it was for the Governor-General to dispose of the young Chief as he pleased ! Hardinge incredulously looked at the functionary of the Sikh Government , he praised him for his neutrality, but discreetly ignored his ignominious suggestion [4]

3 Terms offered to the Sikhs

By the Treaty of Lahore (9 March, 1846), which for obvious reasons, Gulab Singh did not sign, the Lahore Government surrendered to the British all its Cis Sutlej estates It also ceded to them, the Jullunder Doab—the territory lying between the Sutlej and the Beas , and agreed to the payment of 1½ crores of rupees as idemnity for the expenses of the war As the Lahore Government was unable to pay this amount additional territory situated between the Beas and the Indus including the province of Kashmir and Hazara, was taken by the British The Sikh army was disbanded, and the strength of the new one to be organised in its place, was restricted to 25 battalions of infantry (20,000 men), and 12 000 cavalry The entire control of the rivers Beas and the Sutlej was to rest with the British Government Under certain specific conditions, British troops were to have free passage through Lahore territories Finally, the Lahore Government

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1 *Ibid* 7 June 1846 (EP) PRO *op cit*
2 p 287
3 Governor-General to Secret Committee 19 February, 1846, *ut supra.*
4 *Ibid*

agreed to recognise the independent sovereignty of Gulab Singh in his possessions, and in those, which would he made over to him hy the British Government.[1]

Supplementary articles, added to the treaty two days later, provided, that at the solicitation of the Darhar, a British force would remain in occupation of Lahore till the end of the year 1846. It would protect the person of the Maharaja, during the re-organisation of the army.[1] On 16 March, 1846, hy a separate treaty, Gulah Singh accepted British supremacy, and in consideration of a payment of 75 lacs of rupees, the British Government transferred to him, the provinces of Kashmir and Hazara, which it had ohtained from the Sikhs in part payment of the war idemnity.[2]

"Half a million, the total expenses of the war to the E.I. Co.," reads a cryptic comment hy Hardinge on a Statement of War Charges—17,029,825 rupees set against the 12,500,000 rupees idemnity to he recovered by October 1847.[3] The treaty of Lahore deprived the Sikhs of more than 1/3 of their territory, added 3,000,000 rupees annually to the Company's revenues, and Kashmir added to Gulah Singh's hills, made him independent of the State of Lahore. The Sikhs were allowed to reconstruct a government for all presumahle ohjects, hut they were crushed as a military power. "If it he necessary to extinguish this Hindoo sect," Hardinge wrote in April, "it can he done comparatively with ease in October 1846 instead of March 1846."[4]

4. Breeze in Parliament

Though Hardinge's measures had the general approval of Peel's Government, the Whig opposition attacked them without mercy. Hardinge was sharply criticised for not annexing the Punjah, and for entering into a disgraceful hargain with Gulah Singh. Referring to Sir John Hobhouse's virulent speech in the House of Commons, in which he had stated that the Government should at least have its own Governor-General in India to carry out its policy, Hardinge hitterly complained : "I had rather go than be turned out."[5] The breeze in in Parliament, however, proved to be short-lived, and the Home

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1. For the Supplementary Articles of Agreement, *vide*. Appendix No. 13.
2. See Appendix No. 14.
3. Hardinge to Hobhouse, Broughton(BM)-36475, *fol.* 43a.
4. Hardinge to Ellenborough (Private), 20 April, 1846. (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7).
5. *Ibid.*

Government did not interfere with Hardinge's Punjab policy The Whigs and the Protectionists, who overthrew Peel's ministry in July 1846, found it unwise to undo what had been done with the approval of Peel and Ripon Lord John Russell, the new Prime Minister, and Sir John Hobhouse, who became the President of the Board of Control, let Hardinge stay on to conclude his political experiment in the Punjab

5 Hardinge s defence

These two measures—the non annexation of the Punjab, and the honesty of his deal with a minister of the Sikhs, who had come to negotiate terms with the British, called for stubborn defence from Hardinge The treaty with Gulab Singh had raised doubts in the minds of Lord Rippon and Sir James Weir Hogg, the Chairman of the East India Compay Even Lord Ellenborough, Hardinge s closest friend, to whom he wrote candidly on all poitical matters, condemned it as a reward for Gulab Singb's treachery towards the Sikhs [1] In February, Hardinge had forewarned both Ripon and Hogg, that Gulab Singh's encouragement would weaken the Sikhs , it would lead to a measure separating the hills from the plains In reply to Hogg's communication advocating annexation and condemning the transfer of Kashmir, he justified his policy both on political and financial grounds The transfer of Kashmir, he said, had enabled the Darbar to pay the war idemnity, which it could not otherwise pay Gulab Singb, argued Hardinge, had never been a Minister of the State of Lahore Having nothing in common with the Sikhs, he was a much detested man—the Darbar, the rani, the army and the Sikh people were his enemies All had in past conspired to destroy him and deprive him of his possessions As such a charge of treason against him, could not he proved ![2]

Murmurs against the Kashmir transaction subsided at India House, but critics in the press, and Hardinge's personal friends in England, were never convinced of the honesty of the deal Charges of treachery against Gulab Singh, and insinuations against Hardinge for bribing an accredited minister of the State of Lahore and its feudatory vassal, continued to be hinted at Allegations, that Gulab Singh had bartered away the the interests of his sovereign for his own recognition as a ruler independent of Lahore, were to a greater extent true But Hardinge vehemently denied that he had ever been a minister of the Government, and replied angrily to his critics "He had done good service to us, which we recongnised before he was a Sikh Commissioner After the war

1 Hardinge to Ellenborough 3 March, 1846- (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)
2 *Ibid* 7 June 1846 *op cit*

commenced, were we to abandon our policy and treat with indifference the only man who had not lifted up his arm against us, because he came to the headquarters specially deputed by the Lahore Darbar to confer with us as one who had not joined in this unprovoked invasion? His forbearance was rewarded, because that forbearance was in accordance with an intended policy, and because the charge of treason could not be substantiated "[1]

These arguments, however, could not convince Ellenborough, who persistently reminded him that the deal was unworthy of British name Hardinge flung back the accusation. "(You) suggested to (me) to hold out independence to the governor of Mooltan in a manner similar to Golab Singh Golab Singh's neutrality was most valuable before I crossed the river He was informed that his good conduct to us would be appreciated And yet, after recommending me to bribe the chief of Mooltan by the offer of his independence, you consider it treacherous to make Golab Singh the purchaser of Cashmere and the independent prince of the Hills?"[2]

At the same time, Hardinge was at pains to convince his critics at home that he had taken the best possible course at Lahore. Annexation of the Punjab, he suggested, was out of the question, because of the poverty of the Lahore Government, which scarcely enabled it to pay its troops and civil officers[3] It would, therefore, be a source of weakness and not of strength[4] A British force was to occupation of the strong town of Lahore, that position would be maintained till it was certain that the clipped government could take care of itself[5] Yet, he could not satisfy the Whig opposition on these two points He asked Ellenborough "I have sent a copy of my letter to Hogg, under cover to Lord Ripon. If the Whigs come in and approve of what had been done at Lahore, do you advise me to remain, or not me offer to resign?"[6]

6 New political setup

To ensure an effective peace settlement in the Punjab, a new

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1 *Ibid*
2 *Ibid* 21 June 1846 PRO *op cit*
3 Hardinge to Ellenborough, 19 March 1846 (EP) PRO 30/12 (21/7)
4 Hardinge to Ripon 24 June 1846 Broughton (BM) 36475
5 Hardinge to Ellenborough 20 April, 1846- (EP) PRO, *op cit*
6. *Ibid*

supervision and Lawrence's judicious interference, rendered it extremely unpopular

The main problem of Lal Singh's Goverement was to find money for the payment of arrears to the discharged soldiers The treasury was empty, and the British Political Agent had threatened the Darbar, that unless that was done, he would undertake the task himself[1] The stress of financial bankruptcy and the Agent's pressure compelled Lal Singh to make a fictitious declaration that the soldiery had agreed to "voluntary deductions" from the arrears of their pay Further, he began to confiscate the jagirs and resume Khalsa estates—imprudent steps, which had proved fatal to Jalla's administration in 1844 Henry Lawrence ignored the unpopularity of these measures, but his tacit approval indirectly encouraged the minister to bestow the confiscated jagirs upon himself and his brother The process once allowed, introduced into the administration an organised system of favouritism, personal graft and greed It also created a serious political crisis at Multan, which had to be averted by the timely interposition of the British Political Agent

7 Measures against Mulraj

Diwan Mulraj who had succeeded to the governorship of Multan, after the assassination of his father Sawan Mal in 1844, had inherited nothing but trouble from the Darbar The province under his charge, comprised of the districts of Multan, Jhang and the Derajat, for which he paid to the Lahore government annually a sum of 2,100,000 rupees In 1845, Hira Singh's government had subjected him to a succession fee of 5,000,000 rupees, which was later reduced to 1,800,000 rupees[2] Part of it was paid by Mulraj, and the remainder could not be paid on account of the war In June 1846, the Darbar pressed Mulraj for the settlement of the arrears Lal Singh, who wanted to oust Mulraj and install his brother as the governor, had arbitrarily revised the terms of his appointment by enhancing annual payments, and demanding a statement of accounts of the province for the previous 10 years Mulraj was further directed to admit a garrison of Lahore troops into Multan To enforce these terms, Lal Singh had sent n force to Multan

Mulraj's first impulse was to resist , but on second thoughts, he

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1 *Ibid* 2 September 1846 *op cit fol* 10a

2 Broadfoot to Government 19 March, 1845- ISP(I) 20 June 1845

political set up on the N W Frontier was considered necessary Broadfoot had been killed in action at Ferozeshah , Henry Lawrence, who succeeded him as Agent to the Governor General, was stationed at Lahore for the conduct of political relations with the Darbar He was an energetic officer, who understood Sikh politics fairly well His brother John Lawrence was appointed Commissioner of the Jullundur Doab The protected Sikh chiefs were put under the managment of Mackeson Macgregor was sent to Lahore as Henry Lawrence s Assistant James Abbott became Commissioner for the settlement of the Punjab boundaries Hardinge removed Lieut Cunningham from the frontier and sent him to Bhopal "He is clever and very agreeable but a perfect Sikh and to a degree which (dis) qualifies him for employment on this frontier "[1]

A course less ambitious than annexation aimed at the disbandment and dispersal of the army through a Sikh agency A weak Council of Regency, composed of the rani as regent, Lal Singh as the Vazier, Tej Singh as Commander in Chief, and some other chiefs who had signed the treaty constituted itself with British recognition Worse administrative materials to work out a peace settlement, could never have been found The rani, who had driven the Sikhs to fight the British, still represented a faded symbol of their past glory As Ranjit Singh's widow and the mother of the young Maharaja, she could form a rallying point for the ignorant Jat soldiery , but as an instrument for the disbandment and the dispersal of the army, she was more than useless Lal Singh was an avaricious intriguer, whose open intimacy with the regent was a bar to his popularity as a minister Tej Singh, the new Commander-in-Chief, had neither brains nor initiative His disgraceful and cowardly conduct both at Ferozeshah and Sobraon had exposed his real character Immensely rich and ambitious, he had offered Hardinge 2,500,000 rupees at Lahore to buy a princely crown like Gulab Singh and become an independent ruler Ventura described him *' C est un animal,"* and Hardinge believed that a British lieutenant could manage the whole Sikh army better than him [2]

To the Sikhs, the new administration represented all the elements of their defeat and national humiliation The chiefs and the army hated it, and the task which it had to undertake under Littler's military

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1 *Ibid* 21 June 1846 (EP) PRO *op cit*

2 Hardinge to Hobhouse (Private) 22 October 1846 Broughton (BM) 36475 *fol* 87a

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1 *Ibid* 2 September 1846 *op cit fol* 10a

2 Broadfoot to Government 19 March, 1845- ISP(I) 20 June 1845

hegged the Political Agent to mediate in the matter Henry Lawrence found that Mulraj's complaints against the Darhar were, to an extent, justified The designs of Lal Singh for personal aggrandizement, also hecame transparent to him He, therefore, told the Darbar that Mulraj was an efficient officer, who was quite willing to meet his financial obligations and that his coercion hy the Lahore Government was uncalled for With Lawrence's help an amicable settlement was effected. Mulraj paid up the arrears, hut 1/3 of his territories had heen taken from him and the revenues for the reduced territories enhanced from 1,547,183 rupees to 1,968,000 rupees [1] These facts are relevant, for, they have a direct hearing on the Multan rehellion, which took place in April 1848

8 Unpopularity of administration

By the autumn of 1846, the Lahore administration had hecome extremely unpopular Lawrence's complaints against it suggested to Hardinge, the replacement of Lal Singh hy Lehna Singh Majithia, a well informed and clever Sikh hrought over from Calcutta, hut he was considered too timid to shoulder the responsihility [2] The question, however, was more than the replacement of an obnoxious minister hy a popular one As the time of the withdrawal of the British troops drew nearer, doubts hegan to he entertained as to whether the Sikh Government would he ahle to stand alone The presence of British troops had served its purpose It had disbanded the army and estah lished a government [3] Military and political considerations made the withdrawal desirahle hy the end of the year. Prolongation of the occupation of a large town with a warlike population to support a weak and corrupt government was impolitic On military grounds, its extension was also undesirahle The continued stationing of 10,000 Indian troops with one British hattalion at Lahore, involved a great risk From across the horder, 40,000 men with 94 field guns and 250 pieces of artillery could equally keep a vigilant check on Lahore politics [4] The Darhar was, therefore, told that British troops would retire hy the end of the year. Lal Singh however insisted on British support to his government, and suggested the prolongation of the occupation

The question of the withdrawal of British troops, therefore,

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1. Lawrence to Government, 27 December 1846- (PP) XLI, 1849
2. Hardinge to Hobhouse 2 September 1846 *op cit fol* 10
3 Governor General to Secret Committee 19 September 1846 BISL(I)
4. Hardinge to Hobhouse, 2 September, 1846, *op cit , fol* 15ab

seemed to he related to the survival of the Sikh Government. Reports from Lahore hegan to confirm it Littler wrote on 31 August, that the Darhar was divided on the issue, hut he recommended the continuation of the occupation on the ground that the roving hands of discharged soldiery would ereate anarchy[1] Lawrence admitted that his previous opinion was erroneous, that the rani and the minister, moved hy their fears, implored its delay for six months[2] Macgregor concurred with his Chief that the government of Lal Singh could not stand alone[3] Other British functionaries reported that the occupatioo was most satisfactory, that the people in the eity of Lahore would regard the departure of British troops as a ealamity Sikh rule was most unpopular, the Vazier was a scoundrel and the regent profilgate British troops gave security of life and property to the people "a man now lies down at night expecting to he alive in the morning" or "a poor man can see a Khalsa soldier for a debt and not be cut down for his audacity!"[4]

That the government of Lal Singh would not last was apparent, nineteen out of twenty civil and military officers on the frontier, were of that opinion It was, therefore, clear to the Government of India that a permanent arrangement would have to he devised to continue the experiment. On the confession of the Darhar s inahility to maintain itself without British support, Hardinge found a solution to the complex prohlem On instructioos from him, a hint was thrown out to the Darhar that the troops would sooo leave, a few regiments were kept ready for a fictititious move across the Sutlej to Ferozepur The ohject hehind such a step was that the Sikh solicitation for the continued occupation of Lahore "must have the appearance of a national deliberatioo", that they should meet in a convocation and agree to accept a British minister to govern their couotry during the Maharaja's minority "The first step," wrote Hardinge, "was the occuption of the capital, secood, occupation oo the supplication of the assembled chiefs he conceded by the British Government on the terms which gave to a British minister, the entire management of the Puojah Such a system would enahle the Government to govero the Punjab up to Peshawar more easily aod cheaply than on any other terms'[5]

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1 Littler to Hardinge 31 August 1846 Broughton (BM) 36475 *fol* 55
2 Hardinge to Hobhouse 19 September 1846 *op* cit *fol* 45a
3 *Ibid* Broughton (BM) *op cit fol* 12a
4. *Ibid fol* 51a *ff*
5 *Ibid*

9 The Kashmir revolt

As this diplomatic ruse was being perpetrated on the Sikhs, news was received that Gulab Singh was unable to take possession of Kashmir. No apprehension with regard to Gulab Singh's ability to occupy Kashmir had been entertained up to this time, but Shaikh Imam-ud-Din, 'a cobbler's son' and the Lahore governor of the province, who had previously duped the Dogra chief into a belief in his loyalty, had now taken up arms to oppose his entry into the province Immediately afterwards, the British Government held the Darbar responsible for the gross violation of the treaty by one of its servants, and demanded that it should place sufficient forces at Gulab Singh's disposal for the eviction of the rebel governor [1] Eight British regiments, commanded by Brigadier Wheeler, were ordered to march towards Kashmir along with 17,000 Sikh troops, under the command of Tej Singh and General Cortlandt of the Lahore army [2] Henry Lawrence and a few other British officials, who accompanied the expedition as political observers, noticed a curious change in the Sikh army, which appeared willing to co-operate This moral revolution in the Sikh army, commented Hardinge, was the result of the occupation of Lahore and the just interference of the British Political Agent in causing the soldiers to be paid regularly [3]

But before this force could enter the valley of Kashmir, Herbert Edwardes, the Agent's Assistant with Gulab Singh, reported that Shaikh Imam-ud Din was acting under orders from the Darbar, and that his resistance was due to Vazier Lal Singh's written instructions to him [4]

British determination to enforce the terms of the treaty had exhibited to the Shaikh, the futility of any further resistance Consequently, he surrendered on the Agent's assurance that if his charges against Lal Singh could be substantiated, no punishment would be inflicted on him

The papers relating to the trial of Lal Singh have been published [5] A Court of Enquiry—in which, for various reasons, no Sikh was included, consisting of Currie, Littler, the two Lawrences and Goldie, took into consideration all material evidence and found Lal Singh

1 Governor General to Secret Committee 19 September 1846- BISL(I)
2 *Ibid* 4 October, 1846 *op cit*
3 Hardinge to Hobhouse 22 October 1846 Broughton(BM) *op cit fol 81.*
4 Governor-General to Secret Committee 21 November, 1846 BISL(I)
5. Punjab Government Record Office No 16

guilty of instigating the Shaikh to oppose the occupation of Kashmir by Gulab Singh [1] In compliance with the British Government's demand, the Darbar deposed the Vazier and expelled him from the Punjab The Kashmir affair had exposed the real character of both Lal Singh and Gulab Singh By an act of justice, a plausible excuse was found to get rid of the obnoxious minister. "Gulab Singh," Hardinge observed, "is neither militarily nor mentally so great as he is supposed to be He has no real strength He has been duped by a fool and is greatly ashamed of himself "[2]

The expulsion of Lal Singh led to the revision of the treaty of Lahore, the ground for which had already been prepared Hardinge again avoided annexation The Kashmir rebellion did not provide sufficient cause for the cancellation of the treaty, at any rate, the absence of any political combination against British interests, did not justify any such measure [3]

10 Implications of Bhyrowal

The Second Treaty of Lahore, which was signed at Bhyrowal on 22 December, 1846, made the Sikh kingdom a virtual British protectorate [4] The regent was pensioned off, the British Government became the guardian of the young Maharaja during his minority, and a British Resident was to direct and control the administration with a Council of eight Ministers, nominated by himself The British garrison was to continue to be stationed at Lahore, and the entire civil and military administration of the country was vested with the British Resident He could also disband and recruit Sikh armies or replace them by British troops throughout the Punjab "I think," Hardinge commented, "we can govern the country in all its internal details with the instrumentality of the Sikh sardars, more safely, honorably and cheaply than by any other mode that can be devised "[5]

The treaty of Bhyrowal changed the entire complexion of Anglo Sikh relations The Darbar ceased to exist as a sovereign political body The Council of Ministers, which replaced it, could only hold office during the pleasure of the British Resident The new Darbar became a willing instrument subservient to the authority of the

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1 For the *Minutes* of the Court of Enquiry, *vide* (PP) XLI 1847

2 Hardinge to Hobhouse 21 January 1847 Broughton (BM) *op cit fol* 170a

3 *Ibid* 22 December *fol* 160a

4 For the treaty of Bhyrowal *vide* Appendix No 15

5 Hardinge to Hobhouse, 22 December 1847 Broughton (BM) 36475, *fol* 160a

Resident, who was to conduct the internal as well as external affairs of the State in accordance with the instructions of the Government of India The arrangement has been well described by Marsham : "an officer of the Company's artillery became, in effect, the successor to Ranjit Singh "[1]

11 Annexation without encumbrances

It is, however, relevant to examine Hardinge's policy, which scrupulously avoided annexation, but without it, aimed at a complete demoralisation of the Sikh Government Hardinge resisted with vigour, the adoption of a contrary course, which was vaguely hinted at, but not pressed upon him from Whitehall Friends at home, particularly, the Duke of Wellington and Ellenborough advised him to annex the Punjab, but Hardinge did not accept these suggestions. He believed in preserving a nominal Sikh government The experience of Sind in 1843, he admitted, had made him cautious over Punjab affairs Confident of sliding gradually into annexation, he was prepared to wait " if the annexation be desirable, the country would lose nothing, particularly in the state of our finances by waiting till the *Pear is Ripe* "[2] As a military man turned politician, he perhaps hesitated to take a political step of such a magnitude, the failure of which might ruin his reputation as a statesman.

On these main considerations, Hardinge has outlined his policy. The impolicy of annexation, he observed, was entirely founded on his sincere conviction of the necessity of a policy of moderation In the first place, it would be senseless to push the British frontier beyond the Indus For 30 years, the Sikhs had barred the entrance of the Afghans into India, and so long as they continued to do so, British interests were secure Secondly, there were political reasons and their military consequences Annexation, he argued, would lead to a perpetual military occupation of the Punjab at various points between the five rivers and the Khyber. Added to these, were administrative problems Expenses of military occupation would prove too cumbersome for the civil administration to bear. With Kashmir and the Jullundur Doab excluded, it was estimated, that the annexation of the Punjab would cost the Indian Government annually £ 1,000,000 more than the expected revenue of £ 900,000 [3]

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1 *History of India*, p 334

2 Hardinge to Hobhouse (Private) 21 January 1847- Broughton (BM), *op cit*, *fol* 169a

3 Hardinge to Hobhouse, 21 January, 1847- Broughton (BM), *op cit*, *fol* 24ab.

Hardinge was also averse to applying the subsidiary system to the Punjab or breaking it up by annexation up to the Ravi The subsidiary alliance system had been objectionable in Oudh, in the Nizam's territory and in Mysore, its adoption on the N W Frontier was all the more dangerous The latter course was also beset with numerous difficulties Hardinge, therefore, rejected these suggestions from home

Annexation, therfore, was considered by him a source of weakness and not of strength.[1] The arrangements made at Bhyrowal, were a distinct step in the advancement of British aims in the Punjab. He wrote to Hobhouse in April 1847: "It is in reality, annexation brought about by the supplication of the Sikhs, without entailing upon us the present expense and the future inconvenience of a doubtful acquisition It relieves our finances from a heavy pressure, and, in the interval, which may elapse, it is a subsidiary system without its injustices or its vices "[2]

12 Lawrence's administration

Henry Lawrence, on whose shoulders fell the task of enforcing the new policy, was, by far, the best man that could have been selected for this purpose He had come into close contact with Sikh politics since 1840, as a political assistant, first at Ludhiana, and then at Ferozepur. He understood the Sikhs well, as also their virtues and vices Since March 1846, he had seen to the fulfilment of the treaty obligations at Lahore with tact and firmness. Under the new treaty, Lawrence wielded enormous powers, but he resisted Hardinge's insistence on active interference everywhere[3] A sense of moderation guided him in his dealings with the Sikhs, whose national traits he understood so well. He eschewed overhearance, desisted from overriding the Darbar's nominal authority, but enforced his decisions judiciously, by the employment of Sikh agency under British political officers in practically all the districts. His newly formed Council (6 Sikhs, 1 Hindu and 1 Muhammadan) had a system of portfolios; the army was spilt up into regular and irregular forces, a Public Works department was created, and a Sikh ecclasiastical portfolio was placed under Bhai Nidhan Singh

Henry Lawrence was also a capable administrator. The reforms

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1 *Ibid fol* 28a

2 Hardinge to Hobhouse, 5 April, 1847- Broughton (BM), *op cit*, *fol* 224 25

3 Resident to Secretary to Governor General, 21 June, 1847- (PP) XI I, 1849 No 6 (8)

introduced by him, and enforced by John Lawrence, who officiated during his brother's long absence abroad, ultimately brought prosperity, if not immediate peace to the people of the Punjab Administration carried on by the Council under his friendly advice, improved matters After a decade of anarchy, it received the semblance of an orderly government. At heart Lawrence was anti annexationist He agreed with Hardinge on the fundamentals of his Punjab policy, but not in the methods of its execution He compromised by the initiation of a system of coercive co-operation, which, without giving offence to the Council, allowed him interference in the minutest details of the administration Compared to his moderation, John was a zealot in the introduction of fiscal, revenue and judicial reforms Currie, who succeeded him temporarily in March 1848, lacked intimate knowledge of the Punjab and the Sikhs

Henry Lawrence was also fortunate in having political officers, who had varied experience of service on the N W Frontier, and hence, possessed an intimate knowledge of the Punjab affairs Macgregor, Lumsden, George Lawrence, Edwardes, Abbott, and others helped him and John Lawrence in the settlement of the frontier and in the introduction of civil and judicial reforms Lumsden effected the settlement of the Yusafzai country, Edwardes of Bannu, Abbott went to Hazara, George Lawrence to Peshawar, and Nicholson to the Sind Sagar Doab These political officers, spread all over the State, did excellent work Some of them bungled, but nonetheless, their vigilance, energy and perseverence kept the Residency informed of the political trends on the frontier.[1]

Towards the Army, Lawrence adopted a system of regular payments and strict discipline This, he felt would tend to make British occupation less irksome As soldiers, the Sikhs were considered, decidedly, the finest men in the East[2] "If I had anything to say to annexation," Hardinge recommended, "I should enlist whole regiments of Sikhs into our service"[3] Lawrence, therefore, introduced measures which without making the Sikh army too storng would pacify them and attach them to British interests

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1 The *Lahore Political Diaries* (iv vi) give a general idea of the extent and scope of the political and administrative work done by the Resident s Assistants all over the Punjab

2 Hardinge, 3 November 1846 Broughton (BM) *op cit fol* 109a

3 *Ibid* 21 March 1847 *op cit*, *fol* 212b

13 Expulsion of Jindan

In his relations with the Sikhs, Henry Lawrence seemed to get on very well except with the rani In December 1846, she had surrendered all political power, and except for occasional murmurs, she seemed to lead a normal life on an annuity of 150,000 rupees The Resident, however, suspected her full of intrigue, and necessary restrictions had been imposed upon her [1]

Jindan was, no doubt, a clever and ambitious women, but her power to influence Darbar politics since Bhyrowal, seems to be highly exaggerated In November 1846, Hardinge had issued instructions that she must be deprived of all political power [2] She had played a prominent role in Sikh politics in the past, she was the prime mover in the plot in which Hira Singh had been assassinated, she had instigated the Sikh soldiery to cross the Sutlej in 1845 Though Bhyrowal had clipped her wings, she was still considered powerful for mischief "If a good opportunity must occur,' Hardinge wrote in March 1847, "she must be sent away from Lahore, but up to this moment, the insurrection of her ill temper had not been so greatly felt as to justify a harsh remedy without a good cause "[3] A few months later, it was considered necessary to keep her baneful influence from the young Maharaja "It is a measure," Hardinge said, "for the welfare of the boy under British guardianship" [4]

Soon an opportunity occurred At an investiture Darbar held in August 1847, the young Maharaja refused to pronounce Tej Singh as the raja of Sialkot There was neither any justification nor occasion for it, but the Resident had browbeaten the Council in accepting the proposal, which had originated from the Government of India Embarrassment was caused, but Lawrence performed the investiture ceremony himself Immediately afterwards, he accused that the rani had instigated the young Maharaja to insult Tej Singh [5] It was also alleged that she was training up her son as an instrument of hatred against the Darbar, and instilling in his mind sentiments of aversion against the Resident and the Council "Maharaja Dhuleep

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1 LPD iii 9 February 1847 and 10 June, 1847

2 Governor General to Currie (Foreign Secretary) 23 November 1846- (PP) op cit

3 Hardinge to Hobhouse 21 March 1847 Broughton(BM) op cit *fol* 212b

4 *Ibid* 14 August 1847 *op cit fol* 369a

5 Resident to Government 7 August 1847 (PP) XLI 1849

Singh," Hardinge commented, "he removed from the debasing influence of such a mother "[1]

At the same time, rani Jindan was suspected of having a hand in what is known as the Preyma Plot In February, Prema, an ex commandant in Gulab Singh's service and a soldier of fortune, came to Lahore and started intriguing with various officers and sepoys of the Sikh Corps A conspiracy came to light, in which it was alleged that Preyma and his accomplices designed to murder the British Resident and the Sikh Commander in Chief, Tej Singh, on the occasion of a fete at the Shalamar Gardens John Lawrence, who conducted an enquiry, found the evidence in the case 'worthless,' without any evidence of the rani's complicity But he held that there were grounds for suspecting her of being cognizant of the intrigue if not its instigator[2]

On these grounds, it was considered desirable to remove her from the capital The Darbar, however, hesitated to share the odium of her expulsion from the Punjab, but it agreed to her removal to Sheikhupura, 25 miles away from Lahore At the same time, her allowance under the Agreement of December 1846 was reduced to 48,000 rupees

14 Mulraj's resignation

Since the settlement of August 1846 with the Darbar, Mulraj, the governor of Multan, had been chafing under its stringent terms, expecting from the new administration, a modification financially favourable to him In December 1847, he made representations for the reduction of his annual payments, on the ground that the new export and import duties, which the Council of Regency wanted to introduce into the territories administered by him, would further diminish his revenues He further complained that the admission of appeals against his decisions by the Darbar, was derogatory to his personal influence[3]

Though Mulraj had cleared up his arrears of 18 lacs of rupees to the State,[4] John Lawrence, the Officiating Resident, considered the whole arrangement with regard to Multan unsatisfactory He considered Mulraj "a grasping and avaricious ruler of the old school,' who would resist the introduction of new financial and judicial reforms

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1 Governor General to Secret Committee 5 September 1847 BISL (I)
2 *The Preyma Case*—(PP) XLI No 9 Enclosures 3 6
3 Acting Resident to Government 27 December, 1847 (PP) XLI, 1849
4 LPD iii 3 August 1847

into his province. Numerous complaints against his administration had accumulated, and his conduct with regard to the introduction of customs and land-tax, was considered obnoxious. Direct administration of Multan, it was estimated, would yield seven or eight lacs more to the Lahore Government. John Lawrence, therefore, wanted to get rid of Mulraj. His replacement by a British officer, he recommended to the Government, could yield 20 lacs of revenue to the State of Lahore. The entire amount could be paid into British treasury to wipe out the accumulated arrears of debt of the British Government.[1]

For these reasons, the Resident rejected Mulraj's representation which led to his resignation on 21 December, 1847. John Lawrence accepted his resignation, but for administrative reasons, it was agreed that it would take effect from March, 1848.

John Lawrence's suggestions were accepted by the Government of India, but he was asked to stay his hand till the arrival of Sir Frederick Currie, who had in the meantime, been appointed by the new Governor-General, the Marquess of Dalhousie, to officiate for Henry Lawrence during the latter's prolonged absence in Europe.[2] The Darbar was soon afterwards pressed for payments of the arrears of the debt due to the British Government.[4]

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1. *Ibid.* 22-28 March, 1847.
2. Acting Resident to Government, 27 December, 1847- (PP) *ut. supra.*
3. Government to John Lawrence, 14 January, 1848- (PP) XLI, 1849.
4. *Ibid.* 4 February, 1948, *op. cit.*

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BREWING OF THE STORM, 1848

1 Illusory calm

In January 1848, Lord Hardinge left India fairly satisfied with his Punjab policy The Punjab, he reported, had never been so quiet in the memory of man. "My successor," he observed, "may march to Peshawar without losing 100 men, whenever the true policy and real interests of Her Majesty render such step politic or proper"[1] These observations were, however, based on a superficial estimate of the political conditions in the Punjab. It is true that the reforms of Henry and John Lawrence had put the administrative machinery on a some what satisfactory basis, reductions in military establishments had afforded financial relief to the government, and summary revenue settlements had benefitted the cultivator The new agrarian reforms and the *adawlats* were all considered popular. The country appeared tranquil, and the people were learning to appreciate the benefits of British interference[2]

But an eager assumption of the success of the reforms had given to the illusory nature of the calm in the Punjab, an appearance of reality An attitude of complacent incredulity was, therefore, adopted towards the reports from the Lahore Residency, which belied such presumption Lord Hardinge's despatches to the Home Government differ materially from those of Henry Lawrence to the Government of India For months, Lawrence had been sounding a continual note of warning to dispel the belief that all was well in the Punjab 50,000 Sikh soldiers had been disbanded and dispersed to their villages. Sikh generals and colonels of yesterday struggled for bare existence The discharged Jat soldiery of Manjha still drifted on the surface, sullen, discontented and unemployed. The Sikhs, Lawrence had warned his superiors, were accustomed to revolution and excitement; the people had settled down but were still restive. "The discontented will grumble and talk and cabal, they will consult their priests when the *Khalsa* may again be victorious." There were rumours and alarms, and a general desire among the population to escape the foreign yoke. "The animus of unrest and insurrection," he had summed up, "slumbers, but is not yet dead"[3]

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1 *Broughton Papers* (BM), Vol 36475 *fol* 224a

2. Governor General to Secret Committee, 27 September

3. Lawrence to Government, particularly his despatches June, 1847 No 3(4) 4(3)- (PP) XLI, 1849,

In sharp contrast to the reports of British political officers all over the Punjab, Hardinge's public despatches and private communcations had given an impression of perpetual tranquillity in the Punjab.[1] Dismissing the "wild rumours" from Lahore as incredible, he had assured the Home Govenment that the situation in the Punjab could never had been better. Politically, every advantage of the most successful spirit of aggrandizement had been secured, and militarily, the backbone of the Sikh army had been broken.[2] An overwhelming force over 40,000 strong on the Sutlej frontier was ready to crush any combination against British power.[3] Lawrence's repeated warnings against further reductions in the strength of the Sikh army already brought down from 85,000 to 34,000, and Littler's reports[4] that the accumulations of large bodies of disbanded soldiers at the capital created a feeling of insecurity among the people, were not heeded to. Unmindful of these warnings, Hardinge assured his successor that the Punjab was quiet and tranquil. Consequently, the Marquis of Dalhousie, who arrived in India on 12 January, 1848 full of these ideas, found everything quiet in the Punjab, except that the young Maharaja complained of being given too many lessons and the rani of the restrictions preventing her bathing in the Ganges.[5]

Lord Dalhousie had also accepted Hardinge's advice regarding the appointment of Sir Frederick Currie at Lahore, though the Board had been content to let John Lawrence continue officiating during his brother's absence in Europe. Currie possessed little knowledge of the Punjab and the Sikhs. His officious competency lacked Henry's moderation or John's political wisdom.

2 Mutiny at Multan

The first measure of the new Resident was to replace Mulraj by Sardar Khan Singh as the governor of Multan. Two British officers Vans Agnew, as political agent and his assistant, Anderson accompanied him to that place. "Khan Singh," so ran the instruction, "would be almost nominal, administration would be conducted by the British Agent."[6] The new governor along with the British officers and an escort

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1 *Vide*, Hardinge's private letters to Hobhouse—Broughton(BM)36475, particularly those of 6 February, 21 March and 5 April 1947.

2 Hardinge to the Queen, 5 April, 1847 Brougaton (BM), *op cit*, *fol* 225ab.

3 *Ibid* 2 May, 1847.

4 Hardinge to Hobhouse 25 May, 1847. Littler—19 May, 1847, Broughton (BM), *op cit*, *fol* 289a *ff*.

5. Dalhousie to Hobhouse 8 March, 1948. Broughton(BM) 36476, *fol* 46a.

6 Goverement to Resident, 10 March, 1848. (PP) XLI, 1849

CHAPTER XVIII
THE BREWING OF THE STORM, 1848

1 Illusory calm

In January 1848 Lord Hardinge left India fairly satisfied with his Punjab policy The Punjab, he reported, had never been so quiet in the memory of man "My successor," he observed, "may march to Peshawar without losing 100 men, whenever the true policy and real interests of Her Majesty render such step politic or proper "[1] These observations were however based on a superficial estimate of the political conditions in the Punjab It is true that the reforms of Henry and John Lawrence had put the administrative machinery on a some what satisfactory basis, reductions in military establishments had afforded financial relief to the government, and summary revenue settlements had benefitted the cultivator The new agrarian reforms and the *adawlats* were all considered popular The country appeared tranquil, and the people were learning to appreciate the benefits of British interference [2]

But an eager assumption of the success of the reforms had given to the illusory nature of the calm in the Punjab, an appearance of reality An attitude of complacent incredulity was, therefore, adopted towards the reports from the Lahore Residency, which belied such presumption Lord Hardinge s despatches to the Home Government differ materially from those of Henry Lawrence to the Government of India For months, Lawrence had been sounding a continual note of warning to dispel the belief that all was well in the Punjab 50,000 Sikh soldiers had been disbanded and dispersed to their villages Sikh generals and colonels of yesterday struggled for bare existence The discharged Jat soldiery of Manjha still drifted on the surface, sullen, discontented and unemployed The Sikhs, Lawrence had warned his superiors, were accustomed to revolution and excitement, the people had settled down but were still restive "The discontented will grumble and talk and cabal, they will consult their priests when the *Khalsa* may again be victorious" There were rumours and alarms, and a general desire among the population to escape the foreign yoke 'The animus of unrest and insurrection" he had summed up, "slumbers but is not yet dead [3]

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1 *Broughton Papers* (BM) Vol 36475 *fol* 224a

2 Governor General to Secret Committee 27 September 1847 *BISL* (I)

3 Lawrence to Government particularly his despatches of 27 April and 2 June 1847 No 3(4) 4(3) (PP) XLI 1849

In sharp cnntrast tn the reports nf British political officers all over the Punjah, Hardinge's public despatches and private cnmmuncations had given an impression of perpetual tranquility in the Punjab [1] Dis missing the "wild rumnurs" frnm Lahnre as incredible, he had assured the Hnme Gnvenment that the situatinn in the Punjah cnuld never had heen hetter Pnlitically, every advantage nf the mnst successful spirit nf aggrandizement had heen secured, and militarily, the hackhone nf the Sikh army had heen hrnken [2] An nverwhelming force nver 40,000 strnng on tbe Sutlej frnntier was ready to crush any cnmhinatinn against British pnwer [3] Lawrence's repeated warnings against further reductinns in the strength of the Sikb army already hrnught dnwn frnm 85,000 to 34,000, and Littler's repnrts[4] that the accumulations of large bodies of dishanded snldiers at the capital created a feeling of insecurity amnng the people, were nnt heeded tn Unmindful of tbese warnings, Hardinge assured bis successor that the Punjab was quiet and tranquil Consequently, the Marquis of Dalhnusie, who arrived in India on 12 January, 1848 full of these ideas, fnund everything quiet in the Punjab, except that the young Maharaja complained nf heing given tno many lessons and the rani of the restrictions preventing her batbing in the Ganges [5]

Lord Dalhousie had alsn accepted Hardinge's advice regarding the appointment of Sir Frederick Currie at Lahore, thougb the Board had been content to let Jobn Lawrence continue officiating during his brother's absence in Europe Currie pnssessed little knowledge nf the Punjab and the Sikhs His officinus competency lacked Henry's mnderation or Jobn's political wisdnm

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1 *Vide* Hardinge s private letters to Hobhouse—Broughton(BM)36475, particularly those of 6 February 21 March and 5 April 1947

2 Hardinge to the Queen, 5 April, 1847 Brougnton (BM) *op cit fol* 225ah.

3 *Ibid* 2 May, 1847.

4 Hardinge to Hobhouse 25 May 1847 Littler—19 May 1847, Broughton (BM), *op cit., fol* 289a *ff*

5 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 8 March, 1948 Broughton(BM) 36476, *fol* 46a

6 Government to Resident 10 March, 1848. (PP) XLI, 1849

of 1500 troops reached Multan on 14 April, on which date Vans Agnew reported to the Resident, that Khan Singh for some unknown reason recommended the taking of the fort without delay [1]

On 19 April, after relieving Mulraj, as the Sardar and the officers were coming out of the fort, two Multan sepoys attacked the British officers Mulraj's troops mutinied, prevented him from visiting the wounded officers in their camp at the Idgah, and turned out of the fort, the two companies of the escort Agnew reported the incident to the Resident the same evening, sending at the same time, a hurried note to Lieut Herbert Edwardes, the Resident's Assistant at Bannu, to send troops to his support "I do not think," he wrote, "Mulraj has anything to do with it I was riding with him when we were attacked He rode off, but is now said to be in the hands of the soldiery" [2]

From the first report, Currie obtained an impression that the affair was unpremeditated and that Mulraj had nothing to do with it. The Darbar was in a quandary While Currie blamed the chiefs for the rebellion of the Sikh troops, they in return tried to convince him that the whole affair had been planned by Mulraj [3] While a few British regiments would have put down the rebellion, Currie thoughtlessly acted on an impulse, and before the report of the murder of the British officers reached him, he despatched all the available Sikh forces to Multan [4]

At Multan, in the meantime, Mulraj was a prisoner in the hands of the troops, who had called a Council of War on 20 April, and issued proclamations in his name, inviting the people to rise During the afternoon the Lahore contigent deserted, and in the evening, Khan Singh made terms for himself and left the British officers to be butchered. Direct complicity of Mulraj in the murder was never established *An able though disgruntled administrator*, Mulraj was both weak and cautious, and his past conduct was of proven friendliness towards the British [5] Immensely rich but childless, he had discharged almost all his regular regiments in view of his anticipated retirement Yet his conduct was considered as suspicious "Mulraj is most unpopular both with his army and the people, has only one friend in the Durbar and not one in his own family" [6]

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1 Agnew to Resident, 14 April 1848 (PP) *op cit*
2 Edwardes *A Year on the Punjab Frontier* II, p 76
3 Resident to Governor-General 21 April, 1848 (PP) XLI 1849
4 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 2 May, 1848. Broughton(BM) 36476, *fol.* 57a
5 Dalhousie to Couper (Private), 10 May, 1848 CHP
6 *Ibid*

Though innocent of the crime of murder, yet once in the hands of the rebels, circumstances wove a web of disaffection around Mulraj. Having succumbed to the pressure of the rebels, gradually he became a rallying point of all discontent The disbanded Khalsa soldiery flocked to him Dalhousie scoffed at the reports "The Dewan is collecting a disorderly mob, and it is not improbable that they may quarrel among themselves and cut his throat, and then one another s The disaffection may not spread, and the affair may be comparatively small "[1]

3 Reactions

The news of the gruesome murder shocked everyone at Lahore, but none could understand the motive behind it Currie acted with irresolution On 24 April, he issued an order to Major General Whish, Commanding the Punjab Division, to move a column at Multan, but immediately afterwards, fearing that the British force sent to Multan would find the Darbar troops hostile, countermanded it[2] On 27 April, he warned the Commander-in Chief of the urgency of immediate operations against Multan , for, he said, if the rebellion was allowed to spread, it would kindle a flame throghout the land The Sardars warned him that the Sikh troops ordered to Multan were untrustworthy, and that they would prove mutinous In spite of this, Currie moved towards Multan all the available Sikh forces[3]

Lord Gough, the Commander in Chief, acted with significant indecision The revolt at Multan had already convinced him that a general outbreak in the Punjab would follow Immediate military operations, he wrote at once, apart from the unsuitability of the season, would be highly detrimental to those furture operations, which he apprehended, must be undertaken[4] On 8 May, he advised the Government that a force of 10,080 men with 48 guns available for a Multan campaign, if asked to move immediately, would do so with the certainty of a frightful loss, and the almost equal certainty of a failure.[5] Three days later, he communicated his views to the Governor-General that a force 24,000 strong of all arms (1/3 being Europeans), 78 field and 50 siege guns would be required "to crush the whole Sikh nation in arms."[6] Soon after-

1. *Ibid*
2. Resident to Whish, 24 April 1848. (PP) XLI, [illegible]
3. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 4 May, 1848. [illegible] (BM). cp cit., fol 69.
4. Commander in Chief to Resident, 30 April, 1848. (PP) XLI, 1849
5. Dalhousie to Couper (Private), 10 May, 1848. CHP.
6. *Ibid*

wards, he commented on his own proposals "it may naturally appear that the force is more than can possibly be required for the reduction of Multan " He also suggested that native Indian regiments he restored to their former strength by the recruitment of disbanded soldiers [1]

These amazing views were advanced when the Multan affair was still a local incident, and on the Sutlej, in the Jullundur Doab and at Lahore the various British army divisions had upwards of 50,000 men, with a large proportion of British force and an immense strength of guns The victor of Ferozeshah and Sobraon recognised from the outset, that the minor Multan revolt presented the prospect of a fresh war in the Punjab, and that, after a costly campaign, the country had to he conquered up

Lord Dalhousie reacted differently to the whole affair He received the first report at Calcutta on 2 May, and considered it a mutiny [2] On 4 May, the news of the murder of the British officers and the desertion of the Darbar troops reached him, and he exclaimed "it is a calamity !"[3] The same day's mail brought the despatches of Currie and Gough From Currie's report he gained the impression that the Darbar and the chiefs were all faithless, tardy and impotent to right the wrong done to the British power "I shall feel it my duty," he wrote home the same day, "as the servent of the Company and the Crown to exact a national raparation from the State of Lahore Unfortunately, at this season of the year, the day of reckoning must he postponed, but it will come, and assuredly, the reckoning shall be a heavy one "[4]

Obviously, he had accepted Gough's view of the situation He dubbed Currie as a madman for ordering a British column to Multan, and agreed with the Commander-in Chief that it would he better to wait till the cold season for a full scale campaign in the Punjab.[5] From this time onwards Currie seems to have no will of his own The wisdom of his countermanding the order of moving n British column was approved, hut the folly of his despatching an avowedly disloyal force to Multan overlooked

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1 Gough to Governor General, 12 May, 1848 (PP) *op cit* For extracts from Gough s private letter to Dalhousie, and another to Lord Auckland (30 April) with his more direct views, *vide* ***Broughton Papers*** (BM) *op cit*, *fol* 86 89

2 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 2 May, 1848- Broughton (BM) *op cit*, *fol* 66a

3 *Ibid* 4 May, 1848, *op cit*, *fol* 69b

4 *Ibid* 4 May, 1848, (Noon), *op cit*, *fol* 70a

5 *Ibid* 11 May, 1848- Broughton (BM), *op cit*, *fol* 79 *ff*.

4. Advantages of inaction

Dalhousie took the entire responsibility of inaction upon himself. There was no positive proof that Mulraj had plotted against British power. The Resident's view that the rebellion would not extend if immediately suppressed had been overruled by the military authorities, with the hope, that it would spread and culminate into a war with the Sikhs, for which immediate preparations should be undertaken.[1] Prompt military action, he explained to the Home Government, was inexpedient on political grounds alone. The British Resident, he said, was in full control of the civil and military administration. A British force was in possession of the capital of the country and the person of the sovereign. It would, therefore, be of advantage to postpone the squaring of accounts with the State of Lahore.[2]

Excuses for the delay did not lag behind the inaction. The season was hot and the fort of Multan very strong; it could not be invested without a siege-train. Movable columns kept by Hardinge at Ferozepur lacked carriage and heavy guns. Preparations for full scale military operations were necessary, and both the season and distance forbade immediate action. Dalhousie summed up his argument in a subsequent private despatch: "I had before us two great evils. Delay, giving temporary immunity to a rebel, was an evil. Action, involving loss of life and possible failure for a time, was another evil. I think the latter was much the greater peril of the two; and I am satisfied that we have rightly chosen the lesser of the two evils in resolving to delay and hide our time."[3]

5. Surprise at home

These arguments that the Multan affair would become a national uprising in the Punjab, requiring military preparations for a full scale war, convinced no one in England. Eyebrows were raised and surprise expressed at the so-called national wrong done by the Sikhs, for which, a national reparation was to be exacted from the State of Lahore. Henry Lawrence condemned the delay as a resolution by the Government of India to have a grand hunt in the cold season. Writing to Dalhousie, he said, that he would not have allowed the rebellion to make any headway even for a day; that he would have left John Lawrence in charge at Labore and marched himself to Multan with the

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1. *Ibid.* 4 May, 1848 (Noon), *op. cit., fol.* 78b, 83a.
2. Dalhousie to Couper (Private), 4 May, 1848-CHP.
3. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 2 June, 1848-Broughton (BM), *op. cit., fol.* 99a-105a.

Lahore and Frozepur brigades[1] The general opinion at India House seemed to be for immediate action Besides Henry Lawrence, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Hardinge and Charles Napier had been consulted by Sir John Hobhouse He, therefore, wrote to the Governor General on 24 June that the fear of a wide spread rebellion was exaggerated, and the inaction uncalled for, that the force which Dalhousie proposed to send against Multan, appeared to everybody he had consulted, excessive and unnecessary[2] British political officers in the Punjab—Currie, John Lawrence, Taylor, Edwardes, Abbott and Nicholson, all pressed in vain upon the Government the necessity of taking instant action "It was my belief at the time," records Sir Herbert Edwardes, "that had the Mooltan rebellion been put down at once the Sikh insurrection would never have grown out of it, it was a belief shared, moreover, by every officer in the Punjab"[3]

Dalhousie allowed the rebellion to spread for 5 months Evidence of the spirit of revolt among the sardars and military officers was lacking from the earlier reports of the Resident at Lahore Nicholson from Hazara, George Lawrence from Peshawar, and other political officers in the far flung districts, vouchsafed for the loyalty of the officers of the Sikh army[4] Dalhousie, however, did not accept these opinions He dismissed all criticism for want of energy with the tacit observation "It is astonishing how vigorous gentlemen are who have no responsibility!" Refuting further the charge of inaction and pusillanimity on the part of the Government of India, he remarked "War as much as you please if we can't help it, but I decline a war against God Almighty and His elements, for they would be our real antagonists, and not the Sikhs"[5] From May onwards, full scale military preparations for a costly war were taken in hand These, he pointed out, were essential, for, from past experience they had known *to their cost, how the Sikhs* could fight behind their guns and walls "if they make up their mind to stand it out a garrison of Sikhs and Akalis, hemmed in by desperation, will bite hard before they either die or give in"[6] But the real motive of his policy became clear, when he wrote to his friend George Couper: "If not in my day, assuredly in my successor's, the curtain will fall on the Sikh dynasty If it be not sponged out *now*, there will be no real

tranquillity or sense of peace secured. The fight to annex the Punjab is beyond cavil "[1]

6 A subaltern's march

Meanwhile, dramatic events in the northwest began to explode the myth of the invincibility of Multan Lieutenant Herbert Edwardes, the Resident's Assistant at Bannu, who had received on 22 April, Van Agnew's pencilled message at Dera Fateh Khan, decided to march on Multan at once[2] Few British military annals in India provide a more exciting task undertaken by a young subaltern, with so inadequate means Two days later, he received further intelligence that both Agnew and Anderson were dead, and that Mulraj was a prisoner in the hands of the rebels Edwardes lost no time in raising levies from among the Pathan mercenaries, and summoning Von Cortlandt, the Lahore commander at Bannu, called upon Mulraj to submit He occupied Leiha and Dera Ghazi Khan, and timely help was sought from the Daudpotas of Bahawalpur As he was getting ready to cross the Indus, he received a private note (dated 29 April) from Currie, directing him to keep his troops away from Multan Edwardes' diary (8 May) shows his amazement at these instructions, but in spite of them, he proceeded with his preparations, pointing out to the Resident, that if Multan was not invested at once, the Derajat would be engulfed in revolt Soon, the official despatch from the Residency informed him of the meaning of the private note[3] Angrily he wrote to Hodson, the Resident's Assistant at Lahore, observing cynically that the rebellion could not be put off like a champagne tiffin, with a three-corner note to Mulraj, to name a date more agreeable[1]

Edwardes' Political Diaries break off at this point (8 May), but the missing link is supplied by the *Broughton Papers* Any negotiations with Mulraj and his probable surrender, would have rendered unnecessary the plans of the Government of India for a full scale campaign in the Punjab during the winter Curiously, Currie approved of his Assistant's conduct, but Dalhousie was furious at the audacity of "a subaltern officer on the extreme confines of the Punjab" He wrote indignantly to Currie in a private letter on 28 May "I altogether disapprove of army officers such as Lieutenant Edwardes, taking upon himself to volunteer negotiations on a subject of such magnitude, *absolutely and utterly*, without authority even from his immediate superiors and to the possible

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1 Dalhousie to Couper (Private) 4 August 1848- CHP
2 LPD v 22 April, 1848
3 Currie to Edwardes, 29 April 1848- (P) No 176

embarrassment of the Government of India" He further forbade the Resident to enter into negotiations with the Darbar "in the event of any sudden conclusion of the insurrection being brought to pass"[1]

Edwardes, however, was not discouraged He advocated an immediate investment of Multan, begged for help, and proceeded without it[2] On 20 May, he reported that he had effected a junction with Von Cortlandt's troops, that he would prevent Mulraj's troops from crossing the Indus, and would blockade Multan[3] But on 23 May, Currie expressed his inability to help him "My position," he wrote to Edwardes, "is one of great difficulty The siege of Multan is declared impracticable by military authorities at this season" He therefore advised him to confine his operations to the right bank of the Indus[4] This was necessary, for, the Government of India had strongly disapproved of his conduct, particularly his intention of offering terms to Mulraj[5]

But Edwardes did not confine himself to the trans Indus districts On 14 June, he crossed the Indus and the Chenab, joined forces with the Bahawalpur Daudpotas, and four days later, inflicted a crushing defeat on Mulraj's forces at Kaneyree Mulraj shut himself up in the citadel, and Edwardes stood at Tibee, 2 coss from the city, and jeeringly informed the Resident that the enemy was in a humble position, and that it would be a pity if "the very little extra impulse" to crush the rebellion would now be denied to him All he now wanted was a few heavy guns, a mortar battery, and sappers and miners to put an end to the whole affair[6]

Edwardes' initiative and promptitude convinced the Home Government, that the Commander-in Chief's views regarding the impracticability of an immediate advance on Multan, were erroneous The newspapers began to taunt Gough "Is the army so degenerated that it can't act except in the cold weather!"[7] Nobody at India House believed that an immediate advance on Multan was either perilous or impracticable Edwardes' victory at Kaneyree and the Government of India's refusal to send him reinforcements, however, created a sharp reaction in London Dalhousie complained in a private despatch :

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1 Dalhousie to Currie (Private) 28 May, 1848 Broughton (BM), *op cit fol* 113 *ff* and 117b

2 Edwardes to Currie 18 and 20 May 1848 (PP) XLI, 1849

3 *Ibid* 20 May 1848 *op cit*

4 Resident to Edwardes 23 May, 1848 (PP) XLI 1849

5 Government to Currie, 27 May, 1848 *op cit*

6 Edwardes to Currie 18 June 3 July, 1848- (PP) *op cit*

7 *Broughton Papers* (BM) *op cit*, *fol* 105

"The dispatches of the Court by the last mail are not satisfactory Mr Edwardes' successes have made them cock a hoop, they crow loudly, and manifest a strong intention of throwing this government over, and modifying the approbation which they cordially bestowed on our policy"[1] Officially, however, he entered into a long discussion justifying his inaction In a 56 page letter to the President of the Board, he recapitulated the same arguments, emphasising the impregnability of the fort, the seasonal inudations, the distance, the time necessary for full scale military preparations, and the scale of measures required to suppress the rebellion [2]

7 Sikh national resentment

Meanwhile, at Multan the events began to take the expected turn Mulraj s revolt was the direct result of British inaction, but Herbert Edwardes' flagrant abuse of power transformed it into a national rising of the Sikhs While the Lahore troops were kept at a distance from the citadel, Edwardes had recruited 14,500 Pathan and Baluch levies in the Muslim districts west of the Indus—mercenary tribesmen, freebooters and vagabonds, to destroy the Sikhs His *agent provocateur*, a Muslim fanatic named Faujdar Khan, had incited the Muslim population of these districts by war cries of *jehad* to rise against the Sikhs Religious passion of the Afghan tribesmen having been aroused for glory and plunder, they swarmed round Multan to wrest from Mulraj, the infidel province of Multan

The news of the investment of Multan by Edwardes' mercenary hordes spread like wild fire. It aroused national resentment among the Sikhs for their betrayal by the British Mulraj possessed neither the heart nor the will to lead a popular revolt, but Edwardes' action mobilized Sikh national opinion in his favour The Sikh troops at Multan began to be disaffected The Khalsa war cry began to be heard again, and priestly predictions summoned Sikh fanaticism to end British domination from the kingdom of Ranjit Singh [3] Priests and prophets proclaimed Mulraj as the leader who was to restore Khalsa supremacy once again over the land of the five rivers [4]

And yet, as a focus of Sikh national resentment against Edwardes' dangerous move, Mulraj appears a grotesque figure A staunch Hindu

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1 Dalhousie to Couper (Private) 31 October 1848- CHP
2 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 2 June 1848 Broughton ((BM) *op cit fol 95 ff*
3. *Ibid fol 90 ff*
4 *Ibid* 11 May, 1848 *op cit*, **fol 78b**

of the old feudal dye, his family had ruled the province for two generations Denuded now of all political power, having no army of his own, and no friends at the Darbar, he appears a lonely and pathetic person He swore that he had taken up arms to extricate the Maharaja from the thraldom of the *firangees* Sikh patriotism began to be harnessed by those around him, and the soldiers began invoking the grace of the Gurus. The Maharaja and the mother of all the Sikhs, he declared, were in sorrow and affliction Messages went round that the will of the Gurus has ordained the destruction of the enemies of the *Khalsa*—both the hated *firangees* and the detestable Afghans The servants of the *Khalsa* should rise to save their sovereign and religion [1]

At this moment, a Sikh religious leader of reputed sanctity and influence, Guru *Bhai Maharaj*, appeared on the scene He unsheathed the Khalsa sword and raised the standard of revolt against the British, who had allied themselves with the Muslims to destroy the Sikhs Guru Bhai Maharaj spoke to the Sikh people, the provincial officials and to all the highest men in the State He raised levies and fanned the flame of disaffection in the countryside People fed his army, rustic rude Jats joined his train, and minor officials, *kardars*, police and soldiers hailed him as the saviour of the *Khalsa* [2]

8 Troop movements

As these reports trickled to Calcutta, troops began to move towards the frontier Under cover of relief, the Lahore garrison was reinforced with a troop of artillery, a wing of 14th Light Dragoons, a regiment of native cavalry and two regiments of infantry.[3] A British regiment was moved from Ambala to Ferozepur and another from Meerut to Ambala The fortress of Govindgarh was ordered to be garrisoned by British regiments, but Currie thought it too risky [4] By 2 June, 1848, an army had been assembled at the frontier—11,740 men in the Bari Doab, and 9,430 men in the Jullundur Doab, a force of 21,170 men awaiting the arrival and end of the monsoon before going into action against Multan "I entertain no alarm whatever," commented Dalhousie, "for the position of our power in the Punjab whatever I have detailed is sufficient to maintain itself against the whole Khalsa force and Gulab Singh to boot" [5]

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1 Mulraj's Letter Broughton (BM) *op cit fol* 191ab
2. *Broughton Papers* (BM) *op cit fol* 193b, 194a
3 Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 2 June 1848- Broughton (BM) *op cit fol* 95 *ff*
4 *Ibid* 9 June, 1848, *op cit*, *fol* 121
5 *Ibid* 2 June, 1848, *op cit*, *fol* 98b.

9 Winds of disaffection

These military preparations kept a steady pace with wild rumours, and under the stress of both, Dalhousie's mind was gradually working towards the annexation of the Punjab During the past two months, strange reports had come from the Lahore Residency The fanatic who had wounded Vans Agnew was reported to have traced his act to Guru Gobind Singh's vision commissioning him to the deed Edwardes reported from Multan that the escort had called all the true Sikhs to join them at Multan [1] On 13th June, he informed the Resident that the Jagirdari force and the Purbia regiments under Sher Singh were the most disaffected of the whole force sent from Lahore [2] He warned that if a Sikh army had been allowed to collect before Multan, it would have gone over to Mulraj whom they acclaimed as the saviour of the Khalsa raj [3] Taylor reported from Bannu, that the Sikh soldiers regarded the Multan affair as a heroic effort to throw off the foreign yoke by Mulraj On 26th July he informed that such was the feeling of excitement in his force that the Sikh soldiers might kill their officers, seize the guns and go off to Multan [4]

Winds of disaffection blowing from the south had a disturbing effect on the Sikh army and the population all over the Punjab While the rising temper of Sikh national feeling was sensed correctly, everyone appeared oblivious to the necessity of its confinement or mollification On the contrary, its magnification became a favourite pastime of all British officers Highly exaggerated reports that the Multan crisis was not an isolated incident, but part of a bolder plan aiming at the restoration of the Sikh power in the Punjab soon began to be received at the Residency Conspiracies, some real and some imaginary, began to be discovered

10 Conspiracies

On 10th July, the Resident reported the existence of a conspiracy in the Sikh army for the re establishment of the *Khalsa* and the expulsion of the British from the Punjab On 31st July, he discovered another plot by the Sikh army, the Darbar chiefs and the population for "a grand struggle" to expel the British from the Punjab "The

1 Edwardes report Broughton (BM) *op cit*, *fol* 190b
2 *Ibid op cit fol* 193a
3 *Ibid fol* 191b
4 Taylor s report (8 May and 26 July) Broughton (BM) *op cit fol* 191a ; 193b

plan," he said, "was communicated to the Sikh army and to all chiefs of the Punjab The members of the Darbar were consulted and promised their co operation Emissaries were sent to Cabool, Candahar, Casbmere and Jummu and tbe hill states, the protected chiefs were consulted as were the chiefs of Rajputana and the rulers of Jujjur and Rampore "[1] The Multan revnlt, he concluded, was merely an occasion, seized upon by the Sikh chiefs, the population and the army to mature a universal conspiracy against the British

These wild and imaginary charges could never he proved, but the reports caused alarm at the Residency Early in May, a doubtful conspirarcy to tamper with the loyalty of the British troops at Lahore had come to light [2] A dismissed general of the Sikh army, and an alleged agent of the rani, were hanged at the Resident's orders after a mock trial [3] The incident prnvided a plausible excuse for the expulsion of the rani from the Punjab

11 Deportation of the rani

Since her removal to Sheikhupura in Septemher 1847, rani Jindan had been living under strict British surveillance, hut she was still considered a woman of great resolution who could sway the Sikh armies Because of the fear that she might raise a general revolt in the Punjab, Dalhousie had *instructed Currie to expel her unceremoniously from the* Punjnh Currie acted before Dalhnusie's instructions reached him. He implicated the rani in the plot, had her allowance reduced to 4,000 rupees a month, and eontrary to the advice of the Council, removed her to Ferozepur, "hefore a soul knew about her removal" She was sent to Benares with the warning, that if she was detected intriguing in state matters any more, she would be shut up in the fortress of Chunar. Newspapers commented that she had been whisked away from Sheikhupura by a stratagem [4] Dalhousie's apprnbation of Currie's action is significant "Nothing could have been better planned, more speedily and more secretly or better executed than the removal of the Maharani *with* the sanction of the Darbar Ynu bave got rid of a serious danger by that act."[5]

Jindan's political influence nn Punjab affairs seems tn be unduly

1. Broughton (BM), *op cit*, *fol* 192b 195a.
2 Currie to Government, 9 May, 1848-(PP) XLI, 1849
3 Governor General to Secret Committee, 3 June, 1849 *BISL(I)*
4 Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 2 June 1848 Broughton (BM), *op cit*, *fol* 91b-94b.
5 Dalhousie to Currie (Private), 28 May, 1848-Broughton (BM), 36476, *fol* 118b

magnified even long after her deportation to Benares, when her allowance was further reduced to 1,000 rupees per month and restrictions involving ill treatment and indignity were placed upon her "Her memory survived, for she was not a woman to be forgotten,' observes Herbert Edwardes, 'but her influence had followed her power, and there was no longer a man found in the Punjab who would shoulder a musket at her bidding'[1] But Dalhousie considered her a great menace "Rely upon it, she is worth more than all the soldiers of the state put together, for any purposes of mischief!"[2] The news of her banishment gave the ignorant Jat soldiery ample grounds for resentment To the Sikh population, as a whole, it appeared as a national affront While her presence in the Punjab would have passed unnoticed, her exile provided a cause of disaffection among the troops at Multan and Hazara.

12 Currie raises a storm

Towards the end of June, Edwardes' levies supported by Cortlandt's troops gained another victory over Mulraj at Suddosain, a suburb of Multan, and exposed the hollowness of military excuses based on the inclemency of weather He warned the Resident that if the rebels were allowed more time, the rebellion would turn into a general uprising in the Punjab[3] The Home Government was now convinced that the Indian military authorities had acted on a groundless supposition, and that both the Commander-in Chief and the Resident had overrated the difficulties[4]

Gough still refused to take upon himself the responsibility of sending a relief force to Multan Currie, therefore, acted on his own initiative and ordered General Wheeler to despatch a brigade to Multan The matter raised a minor storm Gough was opposed to it, Dalhousie was opposed to it, and Sir John Littler, the Military Member of the Council, strongly objected to the immediate undertaking of the siege of Multan[5] On 11 July, the Government concurred with Littler and Gough, but nothing could be done, for, the Resident was empowered to seek assistance from the Commandant of the Punjab Division independently It hesitated to quash the Resident's order, but ultimately, after

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1 *A Year on the Punjab Frontier* ii 142

2 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 3 January 1849 Broughton (BM) *op cit fol* 310

3 Edwardes to Resident 3 July 1848 Currie to Government 10 July 1848 (PP)XLI 1849

4 *Secret Committee*—India Despatch (I) 1 September 1848 No 1333

5 For Littler's *Minute vide* (PP) XLI 1849

reprimanding Currie for hasty action, gave a grudging consent[1] A column from Ferozepur and a siege train of 32 guns, under Lord Napier of Magdala, was added to Whish's brigade of 7,000 men which proceeded to Multan

13 Case for annexation

Before the commencement of the siege of Multan Dalhousie had prepared a case for the annexation of the Punjab The time for the indictment of the Sikhs had come, and he did it fairly well in a private despatch to the Home Government[2] Dalhousie observed that since the treaty of Bhyrowal, the British had given ample proof of their good faith by maintaining the Sikh Raj They had assumed the guardianship of the Maharaja, and preserved the peace of the country by means of a British force for which, the Sikhs had agreed to pay annually 2 200,000 rupees A Council of Regency under the British Resident had run their government, and had kept their army in a state of highest efficiency On the other hand, the Lahore Government had not fulfilled its contract It had not paid the stipulated sum for the maintenance of the troops, and the debt had accumulated to 5,300,000 rupees The Darbar had failed to punish the criminal who had murdered two British officers, it had no power to demand obedience from its army and repress the rebellion

The Multan revolt, Dalhousie emphasised, was a universal conspiracy of the Sikhs, for the expulsion of the British from the Punjab Reports from all over the country showed that the whole Sikh army, the Darbar, and the population were involved in it to re establish Khalsa independence It was further confirmed that the disaffection was not confined to the army but had spread to the Sikh population The Resident at Lahore, added Dalhousie does not believe in a universal conspiracy, but the Sikhs believe in it "which is as mischievous as if the ambitions were real"[3] He had, however, been directed to furnish proof of an organised conspiracy But 'Even if the proof of a general conspiracy should fail, it is my opinion, that however contrary it may be to our past views and to our future wishes, the annexation of the Punjab is the most advantageous policy for us to pursue The present policy of moderation has been carried on too far'[4]

1 Government to Currie 22 July 1848-(PP) XLI 1849

2. Dalhousie to Hobhouse 15 August 1848 Broughton (BM) 36476 *fol* 186b 215b

3 *Ibid fol* 195b Currie's private despatch of 31 July is also given at the same place

4 *Ibid*

Two years of Hardinge's political experiment in the Punjab had shown, that a weak Sikh government in its abject subservience to the Resident, could neither control the army nor protect its subjects without British help The Darbar and the sardars were demoralised Added to this, was the hostile spirit of the Khalsa soldiery Disbanded, ruduced, and humiliated, as they were, they bated their conquerors Nothing could banish from their minds this feeling, so long as there was a Sikh army, or the Sikh population was allowed to carry arms [1] Besides, the experiment had proved a financial liability to the Indian Government The State of Lahore was in debt to the extent of 5,300,000 rupees, large Pathan levies had been raised and must be paid for The Bahawalpur Nawab demands a price for the services he had rendered "He looks for the territory of Multan, but shall not have a foot of it" [2]

The ultimate course to be adopted towards the Punjab, argued Dalhousie, should not be a half measure Multan could be annexed after its reduction, but as a solution of the problem, it would be cumbersome Multan was separated from British territory by over 200 miles If garrisoned by British troops, no military support from Sind or Ferozepur could be easily sent to it in an emergency A sudden withdrawal of the British army from the Punjab was another solution, but a senseless one It would not afford any security against the turbulence of the Sikhs [3] The inevitable chaos which would follow such a step, would make British interposition essential [4]

The solution suggested by Dalhousie to the Home Government for immediate adoption after the conclusion of Multan operations, was staggeringly simple The "miserables in the Council of Regency" could be confronted with their own incompetency, and the treachery of their army, and told that because of the hostility shown by the national part of the State of Lahore to the British, it had rendered itself unfit to exist The Punjab could then be annexed to the British Empire in India [5] "I believe in my conscience," Dalhousie observed, "that we shall never have peace till we deprive them of the power to make war And as they have once again placed themselves in our power I think, we ought to subvert that government, abolish that army, and convert into a British

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1 *Broughton Papers* (BM) *op cit fol* 205a
2 *Ibid fol* 205b
3 *Ibid fol* 207a
4 *Ibid fol* 200 *ff*
5 *Ibid*

province, the Raj of the Punjab, which was established by us and has been aided by us"[1]

14 Its financial aspects

These views were communicated to the Home Government in August 1848 During the preceding 4½ months, measures had been taken to assess the financial and administrative implications of annexation Sir Henry Elliot, the Foreign Secretary, was opposed to annexation for various reasons According to his estimates, which were considered exaggerated, the cost of military occupation in the three Doabs, between Lahore and the Indus, combined with that of civil administration, would be prohibitive[2] John Lawrence's latest reports, on the other hand, had placed the Punjab revenues at 10,500,000 rupees[3] These, Dalhousie considered, could be enhanced to 15,500,000 rupees by the resumption of jagirs and the abolition of the Jagirdari troops At any rate, Elliot's view that a large scale military occupation would be necessary, was unacceptable Similarly, the provision for a civil government appeared desirable though not indispensable A rough and ready government would not cost much Financial considerations, therefore, did not outweigh political arguments While further steps were being taken to form estimates of the cost of military occupation and a civil administration, disconcerting news arrived from Hazara

15 Hazara transactions of Abbott

For several months, Capt. James Abbott, the Resident's Assistant at Hazara, had reported that discontent prevailed among the Sikh troops stationed there[4] These reports were so extravagant as to throw doubt on their accuracy[5] Since the Multan outbreak, Abbott declared that a conspiracy was being hatched up by Sardar Chattar Singh Attariwala, the governor of Hazara, to lead a general rising against the British The conduct of this suspicious little autocrat at Hazara towards Sardar Chattar Singh, a chief of eminence and position since Ranjit Singh's time, and whose daughter was betrothed to the young Maharaja, seems extraordinary Abbott suspected Chattar Singh of high treason, cut off all communications with him, and refused to listen to his professions of friendship[6]

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1 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 15 August 1848 Broughton (BM) 36476 fol 210b

2 *Elliot's Report* Broughton (BM) *op cit fol* 212a

3 *Lawrence's Estimates ibid fol* 213b

4 LPD iv p 161 166 67, 169 and 175 *ff*

5 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 7 September 1848 Broughton (BM) 36476 *fol* 226a

6 *Vide* the diaries (LPD iv) of this officer, particularly those under dates 28 29 May 4 5 and 6 July 1848

Abbott's reports were believed by no one at the Residency. The Resident censured him for inserting rumours in his diaries[1] Since the Multan rising, he had been in a state of perpetual excitement. He urged a speedy advance on Multan, magnifying its effects on the whole Sikh army, and tried to link it up with the unrest prevalent in the Pukli Sikh Brigade stationed at Hazara[2] The minor disaffection in this field force, was considered by Abbott as a sign of general Sikh rising against the British. He reported that the brigade was getting ready to march on Multan , that the Sikh governor was inciting the troops to rebellion, and that their example would be followed by the whole Sikh army. "The rising," he reported on 7 July, "seems to have become national."[3] He further alleged that the chiefs and the Darbar were directly involved in the conspiracy.

Abbott's "ready disposition to believe in conspiracies, plots and treason" was treated with scepticism at the Lahore Residency. Edwardes wrote from Multan ridiculing his views[4] Currie considered them incredible Abbott, he said, was suspicious of his own shadow Chattar Singh's stake in the Punjab, as the father-in-law of the Maharaja was too great to allow him to adopt such a course

The measures which Abbott took to prevent "the national rising" at Hazara, also, seem to be extraordinary. Following the example already set by Herbert Edwardes, he collected the Hazara chiefs and aroused the armed Muslim peasantry to destroy the Sikh brigade[5] With the incited Muslim levies, he marched on Haripur-Hazara to expel its governor, who naturally took precautions to protect the town At this juncture, Commodore Cavora, an Armenian artillery officer in the fort, who was in secret communication with Abbott, refused to move his battery, and was consequently shot down for insubordination at Chattar Singh's orders. Abbott now demanded retribution for "this brutal and wanton murder."[6]

The Resident entirely disapproved of the conduct of his wild subordinate. He was amazed at Abbott's assumption of civil and military authority in place of Chattar Singh, the governor of Hazara, with whom it rested to take whatever action necessary for disobedience

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1 LPD, iv 7 July, 1848.
2 Currie to Government, 15 August, 1848- (PP)XLI 1849
3 LPD, iv- 1 July, 1848
4 Currie to Government, 15 August, 1848 (PP)XLI 1849
5 Edwardes to Resident 10 August, 1848, op cit
6. LPD, iv- 8 August, also 6-10 August, 1848

of his orders "I have given you no authority," he wrote angrily to Abbott, "to raise levies and paid bands of soldiers to meet an emergency of the occurrance of which I have always been sceptical" He further accused him of misjudging the fidelity of Chattar Singh from the false reports of unreliable spies [1]

James Abbott ignored the Resident's reprimand He decried the action of Chattar Singh as a cold blooded murder, and proceeded to demand within 24 hours "the surrender of the criminals who had murdered Commodore Canora" He incited the armed peasantry to revenge and triumph over the idolatrous Sikhs To the Resident he defiantly wrote back, that failing the compliance of his demand, he would order the armed peasantry to ravage the country and destroy the Sikh army [2]

Adoption of a uniform pattern of behaviour by two junior politi cal assistants—Edwardes at Multan and Abbott at Hazara, and their open defiance of the Resident's orders, raises doubts whether they were not acting under secret orders from the Government of India Positive evidence in this respect is wanting, but it is a fact that the raising of Muslim levies by them to destroy the Sikhs was lauded at Calcutta, irrespective of the Resident's protestations to the contrary Captain Nicholson, who was sent to Hazara to conduct an enquiry into the whole affair, exonerated Chattar Singh from treason, admitting half-heartedly that as the governor of the province, he had acted to defend the besieged capital of Hazara from Abbott's Muslim mercenaries,[3] but offered him terms which amounted to his dismissal and the confiscation of his jagir Currie who, believed in Chattar Singh's innocence, probably under pressure from above, confirmed this unjust decision Chattar Singh, therefore, had no other alternative but to take up arms and defy the order.

As an isolated incident, the Hazara rising was the result of the stupidity and arrogance of James Abbott Dalhousie had felt surprised at Currie's supineness and doubts, but to the Secret Committee he had reported of a general combination of the Sikhs in the Punjab against the British.[4] Justifying the blockade of Hazara by the aroused armed

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1 Resident to Abbott, 24 August 1848 (PP) XLI 1819

2. Abbott to Resident 10 August, 1848-(PP) *op cit* also LPD, IV-p 222, 225 and 239-43

3 Nicholson to Resident, 16 and 20 August 1848-(PP), *op cit*

4 Governor-General to Secret Committee, 18 August, 1848 BISL(I)

Muslim levies under Abbott, his commentary is bigbly amusing: "It is douhtful who rose first. The Resident blames Capt. Abbott and says his distrust of Chattar Singb was the cause of the army hecoming agitated, hecause they thought Captain Abbott wanted to destroy them hy means of raising the Muhammadan population. He *knew* the brigade had made every preparation to march... For months, he says that he had known Chattar Singh to he a traitor and has proclaimed him to he so. *All this the says he can prove.* Currie now most unaccountahly after saying that every chief had concurred in the conspiracy, refuses to believe Chattar Singh can possihly be disaffected!"[1]

16. Sher Singh's Desertion

For these reasons, the Commander-in-Chief was directed to move further forces up to the frontier. On 19 Septemher, a force of 10,000 men moved quietly to Lahore.[2] The fort of Govindgarh was taken possessinn of ("at last, not an hour too snon!"). The Lahore citadel was occupied by H. M's 53rd regiment. The Maharaja, his property and jewels, raja Gulab Singh* and all other "implicated" chiefs were placed under guard.[3]

Raja Sher Singh, who was commanding the Darbar tronps at Multan, was Chattar Singh's son. On hearing the news of his father's humiliation, he opened a futile discussion witb Edwardes for intercession; and on 13 September, he and his army joined Mulraj. Sher Singh's loyalty had never heen suspected by Edwardes; neither did Mulraj trust him.[4] But his desertion, declared Dalhousie, had at last made the rebellion of the Sikh nation open, flagrant and universal. "The die is cast," he reported. "This is a national rebellion to expel us—the *firangees*. It is a religious war for the Khalsa—their religion. Consequently, after anxious and grave deliberation we have without hesitation resolved that the Punjab can no longer be allowed to exist as a power and must be destroyed!"[5]

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1. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 7 September, 1848-Broughton (BM) 36476, *fol.* 226-228b.
2. *Ibid.* 19 September, 1848, *op. cit.*, fol. 236a.
* A son of Chattar Singh.
3. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 1 October, 1848, *op. cit.*, *fol.* 254a.
4. (PP) XLI, 1849. No. 38(32).
5. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 1 October, 1848-*op. cit.*, *fol.* 252a.

Chapter XIX

BRITISH INVASION OF THE PUNJAB, 1848—1849

1. A war undeclared

If there be a war, Lord Dalhousie had written home in September, 1848, it would be a very different one from the last one. On paper, he said, the Sikhs had an army of 25,000 men, scattered all over the country and likely to be swelled by the disbanded soldiery, but the fighting power of the *Khalsa* was gone for ever, and individual Sikh swordsmen would be swept like dust before a regiment of British sepoys "The Sikh strength," he concluded with benign complacency, "was in their guns, and most of them are reposing placidly at my elbow in the arsenal of Fort William!"[1] The unsuccessful actions of Ramnagar, Sadulpur and Chillianwala, with which the Punjab campaign opened soon dispelled this illusory belief

A declaration of war against the State of Lahore, it was realised, would be highly embarrassing The British Government was the protector and guardian of the ruler of the Sikhs, whose government under the treaty of Bhyrowal was presided over by a British Resident. A declaration of war against the State of Lahore would, therefore, amount to a declaration of war against the Government of India. "Our acts," declared Lord Dalhousie, "require no explanation"[2] On 16 November, 1848, Lord Gough crossed the Ravi with over 24,000 men and 65 guns to give battle to the rebel Sher Singh on behalf of the constituted government of the State of Lahore[3]

Therefore, contradictory pronouncements resulted from both the civil and military authorities of the Government of India At Lahore this bold statement did not ring true, and an explanation for the sudden presence of the British army in the Punjab had to be given Sir Frederick Currie, the Resident issued on 18 November a Proclamation exhorting the subjects of Maharaja Dalip Singh to remain loyal to their

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1 Dalhousie to Couper (Private) 18 September, 1848- CHP.

2. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 30 October, 1848- Broughton (BM) *op cit*, *fol.* 27ob

3. (P) No 2135/W E, 2 December, 1848, Dalhousie, 7 December, 1848- Broughton (BM), *op cit*, *fol* 315 *ff*.

sovereign.[1] The British army, they were told, had entered the Punjab not as an enemy but to punish the insurgents and to restore order and obedience on behalf of the Maharaja. To give public credence to this deception, Misar Sahib Dayal, a Lahore Darbar official, was deputed to accompany the Commander-in-Chief.[2]

Thus the Punjab Campaign opened under these false colours. It amounted to a surreptitous invasion of the Punjab by the *de facto* rulers of the Punjab and the protectors of the young Maharaja, in direct contravention of the political and moral obligations imposed upon them by the treaties of Lahore and Bhyrowal. To designate it as the Second Anglo-Sikh War as is usually done is therefore a *misnomer*.

But while this farce had to be kept up in India, Dalhousie did not mince words with the Home Government. He reported the British invasion of the Punjab in rather clear and unambiguous terms: "Unwarranted by precedent, uninfluenced by example, the Sikh nation has called for war, and on my word, Sirs, they shall have it with vengeance!" He branded the Sikhs, the Darbar and their sovereign as treacherous, and accused them of being opposed to the presence of the British. There was, he complained, no alternative for the British Government but to declare war on the Sikh dynasty. The Punjab could no longer be allowed to exist as a state and must be destroyed.[3]

2. Reaction in London

The vigour and vehemence exhibited by Dalhousie in his public and private despatches was not a surprise in London, but eyebrows were raised at his determination to prosecute an illegal war to end a rebellion. He wrote to Sir George Couper on 8 October: "If it please God to grant me success, I will make a clean job of it this time. I declare it before Heaven I have done all men can do to avert the necessity; but since they will force war on me, I have drawn the sword, and have this time thrown away the scabbard. If the Sikhs, after this is over, rise again, they shall intrench themselves behind a dunghill, and fight with their finger-nails, for if I live twelve months they shall have nothing else left to fight with."[4]

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1. *Resident's Proclamation*, 18 November, 1848- (PP) XLI. 1849. No. 42 (8); Secretary to Governor-General to Resident, 14 December, 1848, *op. cit.*

2. Resident to Secretary to Governor-General, 16 November, 1848-(PP) XLI, 1849. No. 42 (1).

3. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 28 October, 1848- Broughton (BM), *op. cit.*, *fol.* 247b, *sq.*

4 Dalhousie to Couper, 8 October, 1848- CHP.

Both at Whitehall and Leadenhall Street allowances were made for these 'wild outbursts', but Dalhousie's fantastic accusations cut no ice with statesmen closely associated with the political affairs of the Punjab. Along with the Lord John Russell's Government they agreed to the necessity of putting down a rebellion, but pointed out to the absolute immorality of holding the Darbar and the young Maharaja responsible. The India Board tersely reminded Dalhousie that since the entire control over the civil and military matters in the Punjab vested in the Government of India, it could not escape its responsibility. "As the real supreme authority," wrote the President of the Board, 'was vested in our Resident and the Army of Occupation, it is fair to say that the British functionaries are to the full accountable as the Sikh Darbar for any mismanagement that may have led to the present revolt."[1] In short, Dalhousie was told that the political solution suggested by him did not find favour with those in authority at Whitehall.

General opinion in England, in the press and both Houses of Parliament seemed averse to the course suggested. The British Cabinet, going into the whole question of relations with the Punjab, decided that although the treaty of Bhyrowal allowed room for change in policy, it could not favour deposing the son and heir of Ranjit Singh, despite the prospect of a rebellion.[2] The home authorities informed Dalhousie in unequivocal terms that his suggestion to overthrow the Sikh dynasty was premature, immoral and unjustified.[3]

3 Call to arms

With the defection of Sher Singh events began to move towards north. He had soon been disgusted by the suspicious behaviour of Mulraj, and had left Multan on 9 October with 900 infantry and 3,400 horse. He proceeded northwards to join his father at Gujrat. It seems surprising that not the slightest attempt was made either by General Whish with his 7,200 men or Lieutenant Edwardes with his 20,000 Muslim mercenaries to bar his passage, to attack or to follow him.[4]

Initially, it had been believed that Sher Singh's revolt had been on

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1 *India Board Letter*—Hobhouse to Dalhousie, 7 February, 1849. *Dal Mun* Sec 6 (55-58)

2 *Ibid*, 24 November 1848, *op cit*

3 *Ibid*, 7 December, 1848, *op cit*

4 Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 30 October, 1848. Broughton(BM), *op cit*., *fol* 261 *ff*

personal grounds. He was a brave and an energetic soldier, but he had no idea that his defection would gather a storm around him. He had reseoted the affroots to his father and had heen aggrieved hy the Resident's refusal to allow the marriage of his sister to the young Maharaja. As he marched northwards, Mulraj's troops deserted and joined his force. Motely crowds of malcooteots and dishaoded soldiers swelled his raoks, proclaimiog him a leader of the *Khalsa.* Ooce his spirits were aroused, he hegan to helieve this himself. He whipped up enthusiasm for the *Khalsa*, proclaimiog himself to he its servaot aod that of Maharaja Dalîp Singh and calling the people to rise in arms and expel the *firangees* from the Punjah.[1]

Simultaneously in the northwest, the rising uoder Sardar Chattar Siogh had gained momentum. The Sikhs respooded well to his call to arms. In the Siod Sagar Doah, multitudes of dishanded soldiers flocked to his staodard. The soldiers of the Khalsa erossed the Ravi in large numhers out of the Manjha to join him. He wrote to Gulah Singh, telling him to move his troops from Jammu into the Rechna Doab. An offer of Peshawar was made to Dost Muhammad Khan, to ohtain Afghan support.[2]

News of disaffection spread rnpidly and widely. Very soon the northern districts heard of the rising of the *Khalsa.* The contigent at Bannu revolted, murdered their European officers, and marched to join rehel Sher Singh.[3] The Sikh force at Peshawar also revolted and added their number to the cause. Major George Lawrence and other British officers fled for their lives to Kohat in the northwest.[4] There Sultan Muhammad Khan Barakzai, its fickle governor was hohoohhing with the rehels. But in Hazara, James Abbott, who had by his stupidity and arrogaoce raised the storm, eootiuued the game of inflamiog Muslim population agaiost the Sikh "infidels." Attoek held out precariously uoder Lieuteoaot Herhert's hard-pressed Muslim mercenary garrison.

The oorth was seethiog with revolt. Currie seot the frantie report: "All I helieve are disaffected—Chiefs, Darbar officials, army and the Sikh populatioo."[5] The rehellion of the Sikh natioo, Dalhousie wrote, had at last hecome open, flagraot and universal.[6]

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1. *Ibid.* 10 October, 1849, *op. cit., fol.* 250a.
2. *Ibid.* 7 and 19 September, 1848, *op. cit., fol.* 226a and 233a.
3. Dalhousie to Couper, 31 October, 1848–CHP.
4. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 20 November, 1848–Broughton (BM), *op. cit.*
5. Currie's Report—2 September, 1848–Broughton (BM), *op. cit., fol.* 243a.
6. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 1 October, 1848– Broughton (BM), *op. cit., fol.* 247b.

4. The Army of Invasion

The main column of the Army of the Punjab under the command of General Gough, consisted of 2 Infantry Divisons (14,419 men), a Cavalry Division (3,369 horse) and an Artillery Division with 66 guns, including ten 18 pounder batteries and six 8 inch howitzers drawn by elephants In addition, there were 6 troops of Horse Artillery, 3 light and 2 heavy field batteries Its total strength amounted to 24,404 men (6 396 Europeans) of all arms and 66 guns [1]

At the same time, three other columns of the Army of the Punjab were in simultaneous operation At Lahore, in the centre, Brigadier-General Wheeler s Occupation Force, 10,000 strong held firmly the capital of the Sikhs In the extreme south, before the citadel of Multan was the 1st Infantry Division (76 00 men) under Major General Whish, with 93 field and siege guns The arrival of the Bombay Column under Brigadier-General H Dundas had augmented its strength to over 21,000 men of all arms In addition, 5,300 men of the Lahore infantry were under British control at Multan This brought the total regular force at the disposal of General Whish at Multan to 26,330 men The cavalry force at Multnn amounted to 10,173 horse—1st Division, 2,173 , Bombay Column 3,000 , and Edwardes' irregular horse, 5000 And above all, there were irregular Muslim levies and mercenaries raised by the British to fight the Sikhs At Multan, Edwardes had the largest number, 20,000 men inclusive of 9,000 Bahawalpur Baluch troops , at Hazara Abbott had got together 8 000 irregulars , at Attock, Herbert had raised 3 000 men, at Peshawar, George Lawrence had raised another 3,000 , and at Bannu, Taylor had amassed 4,000—an overall total of 38,000 mercenaries, Muslims, Afghans, Baluchs and tribesmen with over 5,000 horse and camel corps

At finally, on the frontier at Gobindghar, Jullundur, Hoshiarpur, and Bodipur had been left a force 5,962 strong with 22 guns to guard the frontier

Taken in all these figures add up to the staggering total of 104, 666 men—61,366 of the regular British army, 5,300 of the Lahore army, and 38,000 irregular troops , 13,542 cavlary (excluding 10 troops of horse artillery), 123 field guns and 22 heavy guns—all deployed at

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3 These and the following figures are based on official British papers published and unpublished (PP) XLI 1849 LPDs private papers of Lord Dalhousie Broughton (BM) MS No 36476 and Dalhousie Muniments Sec 6 and among the latter No 366 (1849) is a particularly informative document entitled *Return of the Troops engaged in the Punjab*

various points in the Punjab. Another crucial factor to remember is that with the exception of the frontier force (5,962) and the Lahore Column (10,000), the entire regular army of the Punjab—45,404 men, 13,542 horse and 145 guns ultimately converged on Shadewal for the final battle of Gujrat with the rebels.

5 The Rebel Force

In sharp contrast to these figures, the numerical superiority of the Sikhs, as claimed by the British, appears to be a myth[1] The Sikh force which ultimately mustered could not even be equivalent to the shadow of the Khalsa republican army which fought the British at Ferozeshah, Aliwal and Sobraon.

The army of the late Ranjit Singh, a powerful resurgent force between 1842-45 and once in control of the State, was completely broken up after its capitulation at Sobraon in 1846 Lord Hardinge had meticulously seen to the complete annihilation of the military power of the Sikhs The treaties of Lahore and Bhyrowal had broken the back of the Khalsa republican army of 92,000 men, 31,800 cavalry with over 384 guns, and the Peace Settlement of 1846 had envisaged its systematic destruction Its soldiers had been disbanded and dispersed, its generals discharged or won over, its *jagirdari* force starved to extinction, and the pride of its artillery—36 guns of the highest calibre, dismantled and carted away to the arsenal of Fort William. The claim that the Army of the Khalsa or of the entire Sikh nation opposed and fought the British in the military operations of the Punjab Campaign of 1848-49, therefore, is hardly admissible for the simple reason that no such force existed. A skeleton army of 25 battalions (20,000 men) and 12,000 cavalry permitted to the State of Lahore under the treaty of March 1846 was a mere reflection of the Khalsa, and the British were its masters Dispersed to far-flung districts for garrison duty under the observing eyes of the British political officers, it possessed neither will nor effective fighting power. Lahore had a garrison strength of 6,500 men, but the citadel was under British military occupation Peshawar had a garrison of 3,000 men, Hazara 3,000 men, the fortress of Gobindgarh 2,000 men, Bannu and Tank 1,300 men, Attock 700 men and Kohat 500 men ; the remaining 3,000 men of the entire force were at numerous small posts throughout the Punjab.

Now, the contingents of the Lahore army which ultimately revolted

1. Lord Gough's despatches enumerate the strength of the Sikh force at Ramnagar and Chillianwala to be 30 000—40 000, and at Gujrat, 60 000 men and 60 guns, see (PP)XLI, 1849 Nos 44(51) and 49 (3).

and joined the rebels were those of Hazara, Peshawar, Tank and Bannu, Kohat and Attock—9,400 men inclusive of Sher Singh's force defeated at Multan (900 infantry and 3,400 horse) The garrison at Gobindgarh had been disarmed and the fort occupied Allowing that the 3,000 men stationed at various isolated places throughout the Punjab could get through and join those in the north, the obvious strength of the regular Sikh force could hardly exceed 13,000 men and 9,000 horse

Disbanded soldiers and the Khalsa free-lance which flocked to it could scarcely exceed 10,000 men With Lahore and Amritsar in the hands of the British and the passage to the Rechna Doab blocked by Wheeler's force, the trickle of unarmed soldiery of Gobind from the Manjha and Malwa regions, the home of the late republican army, could hardly exceed the above figure The disbanded soldiery would merely augment the strength of the Sikh force, which had few generals and fewer arms, it had no access to the state arsenals situated in the British occupied area, and no means of procurement of arms or supplies in the predominantly Muslim districts, the population of which was already aroused against the Sikhs

The above figures show that the strength of the entire Khalsa force could hardly exceed 23,000 men, at any rate, it is hardly possible to accept the statement of Lord Gough that the Sikh army which fought the British at Gujrat was 60,000 strong[1] That these figures are highly exaggerated is evidenced by the fact that the whole Sikh army under Sher Singh and Chattar Singh which, a few days after the battle, surrendered to General Gilbert at Rawalpindi amounted to 16,000 men[2]

6 The sad affair of Ramnagar

General Gough crossed the Ravi on 16 November He marched on rapidly into the Rechna Doab towards Ramnagar, where on arrival on 22 November, he discovered Sher Singh's entire force on the right flank of the Chenab But in the rapid forward movement heavy field artillery had been left behind, and immediately afterwards, an action had to be fought with the Sikhs which was neither brilliant nor complete In fact, it was "a sad affair with distressing results"[3]

Anticipating the difficult situation which might arise, Gough had, a day earlier, ordered Brigadier General Campbell to move out the 3rd Infantry Division from Saharun to disperse the Sikh force

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1 Gough's Despatch 21 February 1849 (PP) XLI 1849 No 49(3)
2 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 24 March 1849 Broughton (BM) *op cit*
3 *Ibid* 7 December, 1848, *op cit*

reported to he in the vicinity of Ramnagar A cavalry division with three troops of horse artillery under Brigadier General Cureton, the Commander of the Cavalry, accompanied Campbell's force [1]

On arrival at Ramnagar, Campbell found the Sikh force in position on the opposite bank of the river, though small parties of Sikh soldiers were observed retreating from the town towards the ford in front of the Sikh encampment Cureton had numerous cavalry hut no guns, and as the situation was pressing, he ordered the horse artillery to charge the retreating parties Lieut Col Lane, who commanded the horse artillery, in his eagerness to overtake the withdrawing Sikh troops through the deep and heavy sand of the river, met with a disaster. The Sikh artillery on the opposite hank of the river opened up with dis astrous effect , and Lane hastily attempted to withdraw the horse artillery, leaving behind stuck up in sand, a heavy gun and two ammunition wagons, which the Sikhs captured

At the same moment, the Sikhs flung n surprise on Cureton A column of their cavalry crossed the river under cover of artillery, leaving him the choice between an immediate engagement or the disgrace of retirement Acting on the spur of the moment, the Commander of the Cavalry of the Army of the Punjab, immediately decided to lead a squardon of H M 14 Light Dragoons in support of light infantry, and in a short swift action, was himself shot dead The Commander of 14 Light Dragoons, was reported missing, and 90 officers and men with 140 horse were lost The only British gain was "a handsome silk standard" captured by a Muslim trooper who was recommended for the Order of Merit by the Commander-in Chief, an eye witness of the battle [2]

The action at Rammnagar was a signal defeat for the British Dalhousie apportioned the hlame between Campbell and Gough for the 'sad affair' from which 'there was no objective to he gained,'[3] and the Home authorities expressed their utter inability to understand as to why the hattle was fought at all [4] Gough, on the other hand, claimed it as a victory. "The enemy," he announced in a General Order,

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1 C in C to Governor General 23 November 1848 (PP) XLI, 1849 No 42(3)

2 *General Orders to the Army of the Punjab* 27 November, 1848 (PP) XLI, 1849 No 42 (6)

3 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 7 December 1848 *ut supra*

4 Hobhouse to Dalhousie 24 January, 1849 *Dal Mun* Sec 6 (55 58).

"was signally overthrown on every occasion, and only saved from utter annihilation by their flight to the cover of their guns on the opposite bank!" [1]

7 The Sadulpur debacle

For about a week after the British reverse at Ramnagar, the two armies faced each other across the river Lord Gough waited impatiently till his heavy guns came up On 30 November, he detached a force under Major-General Sir Joseph Thackwell to make its way across the river and take the Sikh army in the flank [2] In the meantime, he pushed British batteries and breastwork to the bank of the river and opened up a cannonade upon Sher Singh's front in order to divert his attention from the flank movement intended by Thackwell [3] At the same time, another brigade of infantry under Brigadier Godby was detached from the main army and ordered to ford the river 6 miles from Ramnagar and give support to Thackwell's force [4]

Across the river, at a principal ford about 2 miles from the town of Ramnagar, Sher Singh's entire force—12,000 men and 28 guns, lay strongly entrenched So far Chattar Singh had not joined forces and consequently, its strength enumerated between 30 000 40 000 men in Lord Gough's despatch seems not only improbable but imaginary [5] As the numerous fords were vigilantly guarded by the Sikhs, Thackwell's force had to move 22 miles up the river to Wazirabad, where on 2 December it made the crossing Godby's brigade had crossed the river 16 miles below, and so Thackwell hastily marched southwards At midday on 3 December, he arrived at Sadulpur, barely 4 miles from the Sikh encampment Here he halted, giving well earned rest to his men who were in a state of complete exhaustion from 5 days' continuous march [6]

The Sikhs realised that danger was imminent Spordic artillery fire from the British guns on the Ramnangar embankment had continued on their centre Two British colnmns had successfully crossed the river and

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1 *General Orders to the Army of the Punjab* 27 November 1848 *ut supra*

2 Thackwell s force consisted of Brigadier White s 1st brigade of cavalry, the 24th and 61st Foot 5 regiments of native Infantry under Campbell 7827 men 1425 horse and 32 field guns

3 Commander in Ch ef to Governor General 5 De ember 1848 (PP) XLI 1°49 No 42 (10)

4 Godby s force 2nd brigade of infantry 2nd Eur pean L ght Infantry 31st and 70th Native Infantry 2,543 men

5 Commander in Ch ef to Governor-G neral 5 December *ut supra*

6 *Ibid*

threatened their flanks and the rear. Sooner than expected, heavy Sikh artillery opened up on Thackwell's position, while the Sikh cavalry barred the passage of Godby's force Thackwell's instructions were not to engage the enemy till Godby's brigade had joined up with him [1] For some time, the British guns remained silent; they opened up tardily and the desultory fire continued for two hours on both sides. But Godby could not form a junction in time, with the result that Thackwell could neither attack the enemy's flank nor the rear.

As the dusk fell, the guns on both sides became silent, and as the darkness enveloped Sadulpur, the entire Sikh army crossed over to the left bank of the river Jehlum Sher Singh's action thus nullified the British manoeuvre; it also made it possible for Chattar Singh's force to join him later

The British general claimed a victory without a battle He reported a meagre loss of 40 men at Sadulpur, and claimed that the noble army under his command had upheld its tradition of valour. The Sikhs, he said, were in full retreat, leaving behind some 60 boats which had been captured [2]

The news of the ineffective action was received by Lord Dalhousie on 7 December at Ambala He scoffed at the Commander-in-Chief's suggestion of firing a salute for the victory: "I will not do so for I do not like that sort of practice—bravado, and shall reserve salutes for real victories which this is not!"[3] To the home authorities he complained that it was neither a victory nor even a success, and that Gough had not complied with his instructions regarding the crossing of the Chenab He blamed General Thackwell for lack of initiative and drive inspite of the fact that the Sikhs had suffered heavily, and finally retired in disorder "Every one was in the act of advancing when the General ordered a halt However, notwithstanding, the eagerness of the troops and the entreaties of all who had a right to speak, General Thackwell would not advance a yard!"[4]

Lord Gough's "victories" of Ramnagar and Sadulpur surprised military and political circles at Whitehall In both Houses of Parliament disappointment was shown at the mode in which the Punjab campaign had been opened Referring sarcastically to Gough's "Waterloo Letter" about the action at Sadulpur, the President of the Board wrote

1 *Ibid*
2 *Ibid*
3 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 7 December 1848 Broughton (BM) *op cit*
4. Ibid 22 December, 1848, op cit, *fol* 300 *ff*.

by the Court and home authorities against Dalhousie's wishes, and the Commander-in-Chief's acquiescence in Currie's movement of a British column to support him, were highly displeasing to the Governor-General. Seeds of discord sown by these events created further disagreements. Gough's refusal to *dismiss General Whish* for raising the ineffective siege of Multan, the christening of the army assembled at Ferozepur as "the Army of the Punjab," and his order for moving up the Bombay Column to Multan had earned the Governor-General a sharp rebuke from the Secret committee.[1]

privately to the Governor General "We have kept our thoughts to ourselves, unless indeed you think the way in which the Punjab war is mentioned in the Queen's Speech is sufficiently indicative of our disappointment In fact, it is no wonder that all confidence in Lord Gough, if it ever was entertained, should have been entirely lost "[1]

8 A private war

At this place, it is necessary to examine the details connected with Lord Dalhousie's private war with his Commander-in Chief Hardinge had reposed the fullest confidence in General Gough, and perhaps, his finest gesture as a soldier-statesman was his offer to serve under him at Ferozeshah and Sobraon Compared to this, Dalhousie's treatment of the grand old veteran of the Peninsular War appears to be full of pettiness and arrogance, and charged with unnecessary petulance In this sordid affair, the conduct of Gough seems to be more dignified than that of Dalhousie Private correspondence of the two men, the Duke of Wellington and Sir John Hobhouse, reveals that the Commander-in-Chief received a shabby treatment at the hands of both the Government of India and the Home authorities [2]

From the outset, Dalhousie had been averse to the prolongation of Gough's command when it expired in August 1848, and before leaving for India, he had expressed his anxiety for a new appointment to the Duke of Wellington and Lord John Russell [3] The suggestion, however, had carried little weight and the British Cabinet had extended Gough's term mainly on the recommendation of the Duke of Wellington Dalhousie had accepted the reappointment without murmur, though later on, he complained that his wishes had been ignored in the matter Such being the case, a clash of wills between the highly taciturn military commander and the equally overstrung governor-general occurred soon after the Multan affair, when Dalhousie strongly disapproved the movement of European troops by Gough to Ambala and Ferozepur in May 1848 Herbert Edwardes' valiant action at Multan and its approbation

1 Hobhouse to Dalhousie 7 February 1849 *Dal Mun* Sec 6 (55-58)

2 Controversy which raged between the Home Government and Dalhousie on the subject even after the termination of the Punjab Campaign, has never been made public It is however positive that personal disagreements between the Governor General and the Commander in Chief did to a considerable extent influence the conduct of operations throughout the Punjab Campaign For fuller details *vide Broughton Papers* (BM) MS 36476 *Dalhousie Muniments* particularly Letters from India Board in London (Nos 55 58) and Letters from Lord Gough (Nos 71-72)

3 Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 20 April, 1849 Broughton (BM)

hy the Court and home authorities against Dalhousie's wishes, and the Commander-in-Chief's aequieseence in Currie's movement of a British column to support him, were highly displeasing to the Governor-General. Seeds of discord sown by these events created further disagreements. Gough's refusal to dismiss General Whish for raising the ineffcetive siege of Multan, the christening of the army assemhled at Ferozepur as "the Army of the Punjab," and his order for moving up the Bombay Column to Multan had earned the Governor-General a sharp rehuke from the Secret committee.[1]

The hreach widened with the disillusionment which came soon after the actions of Ramnagar and Sadulpur. Charging openly the Commander-in-Chief with incompetency, Dalhousie hlamed him for incomplete actions and enormous losses. From that time onwards, interference in the direction of operations became open and flagrant. Rclying mainly on the information supplied hy politicnl officers, particularly Major Mackeson, the Governor-General's politieal ngent at the Commander-in-Chief's headquarters, he duhbed Lord Gough's official despatches as untruthful,[2] and peremptorily forbade him to cross the Chenab.[3] Gough nequiesced, though with protests against this unwarranted interference, and complained to the home authorities and the Duke of Wellington.

9 Disaster at Chillianwala

Such was the state of affairs when Lord Gough fought the battle of Chillianwala. Resentful of intervention and under orders not to eross the Chenah for over a month, his force remained where it was. His headquarters were at Loah Tihbi and a bridge had heen thrown across the river in front of Ramnagar. "What His Excelleney's plans are," Dalhousie reporteh his forceh inactivity, "or whether he has any plans at all, I am unable to tell !"[4] Attock had fallen and Chattar Singh had gone to Peshawar to meet Dost Muhammad Khan. It was reported that Chattar Singh's entire force had formed a junction with Sher Singh's army. However, hy now Dalhousie realised, though never admitted, his mistake of placing an emhargo on the Commander-in-Chief to eross the Chenab. He soon hecame restive at the inaction of the force, hut seeing danger imminent, he ordered him to strike an effective blow at the enemy immediately.[5]

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1. Hobhouse to Dalhousie, 7 July, 1848—*Dal. Mun.* Sec. 6 (55-58).
2. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 20 January, 1849- Broughton (BM), *op. cit.*
3. *Ibid.* 7 December, 1848, *op. cit.*
4. *Ibid.* 4 January, 1849, *op. cit., fol.* 312a *ff.*
5. C-in-C to Governor-General, Camp Chillianwala, 16 January, 1849-(PP) XLI. No. 44 (51).

When these orders came, the General marched his men from Loah Tibbi to Dhingee, 12 miles distant, leaving behind a small force at Ramnagar to blockade the river and protect the bridge The main Sikh force was at Lolliianwala, its left flank resting in the north at Rasul on the river Jehlum In the south, the villages from Lucknawala to Chak Fateh Shah were in their firm possession In short, the interval of British inactivity had allowed Sher Singh to occupy a strongly entrenched position, completely commanded by the Sikh artillery. In front of the Sikhs was a dense jungle 8-mile broad which could only be crossed by two narrow paths [1]

A day later, on the morning of 13 January, the British approached the village of Chillianwala, where the Sikhs had a strong picket line. Beyond the village lay the ugly and dense jungle whose southern extremity of a low range of rugged hills was intersected by ravines, and in these hills were the Sikhs [2] It is, however, doubtful that their total strength could have exceeded 10,000 men [3] The British took the village, but their preparations for an encampment were rudely interrupted by sharp Sikh artillery fire From a mound outside the village, Gough obtained an extended view of the Sikhs drawn out in battle array; they had moved out of the hills into the dense jungle in front, their artillery bearing upon Chillianwala, their left resting on low hills, and their right on the thick jungle.

The British general at once decided upon an immediate engagement. But to his surprise, Henry Lawrence and Major Mackeson, at Dalhousie's orders strongly objected Here is Dalhousie's own account of his dramatic obstruction just before the battle · "the Commander-in-Chief had resolved not to attack that day, but to reconnoitre and attack early next morning The enemy, however, opened a distant fire, on *which His Excellency forgot or abandoned all his plans and resolved to* attack forthwith Every one about him—Generals, his Staff, my Agent Sir Henry Lawrence pointed out to the inexpediency of this step. His

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1 *Ibid*

2 Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 4 January, 1849, *ut supra*

3 The Commander in Chief in his official despatch from the battlefield estimates the Sikh force between 30 000–40 000 strong which figure seems highly exaggerated Even if we presume that Chattar Singh's force had joined Sher Singh's army—a presumption belied by the evidence, their combined strength could not have approached the above figure Moreover, the Sikh force had not been concentrated before the village of Chillianwala It was spread on the right bank of the Jehlum in a wider arch, from Rasul in the north to Lucknwala in the extreme south

answer was that he would attack. He told my Political Agent that he was the Commander-in-Chief of that army and desired him to he silent."[1]

Few examples of such gross and unwarrantahle interference hy a Governor-General *in absentia* can he produced from British military annals in India. The enemy was poised for attack. The Sikh guns had started a cannonade. The Sikh troops had occupied forward positions in front of the village. Postponement of action on grounds of the lateness of the day, the exhausted state of the troops, or the general unfamiliarity with the terrain would have amounted to cowardice.

Gough acted like a seasoned soldier. Completely unruffled hy the chatter of protestations around him, he drew up the order of the hattle. Any delay in the trial of strength would allow the enemy time to hring up his heavy artillery within the range of British encampment. Withdrawal appeared a had strategy ; hut postponement of action would have resulted in a worse disaster than actually hefell the British army at Chillianwala. Following a conservative pattern, Gough placed Gilhert's 2nd Infantry Division in the right, flanked by Pope's cavalry hrigade and further strengthened hy the 14 Light Dragoons and 3 troops of horse artillery under Lieut. Col. Grant. To the left was Camphell's 3rd Infantry Division, flanked hy White's cavalry brigade with 3 troops of horse artillery under Lieut. Col. Brind. In the centre were placed heavy 18-pounders nnd 8-inch howitzers drawn hy elephants, while the numerous field hatteries were assigned to the two Infantry divisions.

The British heavy guns opened up on the Sikh centre, their destructive fire supported hy the field hatteries of the left and right Infantry divisions. The cannonade lasted for ahout an hour, when hoth the divisions were ordered to advance simultaneously.

But disaster resulted. The density of the jungle made it impossihle to preserve order and formation ; every British hrigade was separated from its neighhour and regiment parted from regiment. The Sikhs fought with determination and daring, and their artillery took a heavy toll, proving once again that it had not yet hecome extinct. Camphell formed a line to his right, ordering Pope to protect his flank and movement. But the ground proved unsuitahle for cavalry action, and the artillery having failed to provide cover, the advancing British infantry-

1. Dalhousie to Hobhouse (Confidential) Camp Mukho, 22 January, 1849- Broughton (BM), *op. cit.*

men were mowed down by the terrific fire of the Sikh musketry The Sikh *ghorcharas* seemed to be on their familiar ground, and in successive onslaughts broke up the British cavalry line and cut down their horse men All was confusion There was disorder in British ranks They were fighting front, flanks and rear at the same time In vain they swept through the jungle, captured and spiked Sikh batteries, only to be driven back helter skelter at bayonet point by individual Sikh soldiers

While Campbell's charge failed to dislodge the Sikhs from their position, towards the right, Pope's cavalry brigade, which included H M 14 Light Dragoons, H M 9th Lancers and the Bengal Regular Cavalry, advanced to meet some hundred Sikh horse swiftly advancing in their direction The Sikh *ghorcharas* swept the field like lightning yelling the dreadful Khalsa war cries The entire British brigade took fright On came the Khalsa horsemen sweeping the field like an avalanche Suddenly to their amazement the enemy took to their heels, as if they had seen a ghost They fled, galloping over their own horse artillery and turning it topsy-turvey leaving their comrades to be slaughtered by the Sikhs Four British guns were lost and nearly half a regiment wiped out Dalhousie records : "The cavalry on the right disgraced their name and the colours they carry They galloped on into the Field Hospital, among the wounded and never stopped till they were brought up by the Chaplain, who was administering to the wounded, and who pistol in hand, declared he would shoot at the first man who passed him!"[1]

In another direction misfortune overtook a brigade led by Penny cuick, which had moved in double time and precipitately advanced through the jungle Confusion followed the regiments got separated, as were the officers from their men, and they arrived in complete disorder at a belt of the thick forest Here the Sikh artillery waited From within the jungle the guns opened up with devastating effect Lieut Col Brookes leading the 24th Foot, was killed between the enemy guns Trapped, the brigade turned to flee in the face of destructive fire of shot and shell It left behind its commander, along with other field officers of the 24th, and nearly half the regiment to be slaughtered remorselessly[2]

The most serious disaster, however, befell Gilbert's division The plight of Pope's cavalry had arrested Brigadier Godby's attention He

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1 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 22 January, 1849 Broughton (BM) *op cit*, *fol* 322a.

2. Gough's Despatch 16 January, 1849 (PP) XLI, 1849 No 41(51).

halted in utter bewilderment and a large body of Sikhs surrounded his 2nd Infantry Brigade. Now Gilbert's force had neither the cover of guns nor the support of cavalry. In the hand to hand fight, the brigade was repulsed and driven back with heavy loss.

The battle lasted over three hours. When darkness fell, Gough left the battlefield, ordering retreat towards the village of Chillianwala, and the Sikhs retired to Tupai, carrying away with them the 40 guns which the British later claimed to have captured! British casualties in the action amounted to 2,446 men, with 132 officers killed and 4 guns lost.[1]

10. Gough blamed

Such was the action fought at Chillianwala. For some days after the battle, heavy gloom prevailed in the British Camp.[2] The Commander-in-Chief claimed a victory, which claim the Governor-General dubbed as 'perhaps poetical.'[3] "We have gained a victory," he observed ruefully, "like that of the ancients ; it is such an one that 'another such would ruin us!' "[4] Dalhousie now came out openly in his bid against the General. He informed the home authorities that Gough's inaptitude to command had been the main cause of the signal reverse at Chillianwala. The army, he said, was no longer safe from disaster, if it continued to be in the hands of the present Commander-in-Chief. He said : "The army officers and men have lost confidence in their Commander-in-Chief and his own confidence is utterly gone. He flees from the excess of tumidity to the excess of timidity, and has no mind or plan—nothing but a will, an obstinate and jealous will."[5]

And yet, publicly salutes were fired and General Orders issued to celebrate the victory, and the losses sustained were minimised.[6] In private, it could not be concealed that the so-called victory was incomplete, and losses sustained quite incommensurate. Another such victory would compel the Governor-General to place the command in abler hands.[7] "He has won me a victory such as it is," reported Lord

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1. *The Return of Killed and Wounded at Chillianwala*-(PP) XLI, 1849.
2. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 22 January, 1849-Broughton (BM), *op. cit.*
3. Dalhousie to Sir John Russell, 20 April, 1849-Broughton (BM), *op. cit.*
4. Dalhousie to Couper, 20 January, 1849- CHP.
5. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 7 February, 1849-Broughton (BM), *op. cit.*
6. *Ibid.* 22 January, 1849, *ut. supra.*
7. *Ibid.*

Dalhousie. "I have placed in the field in the Punjab a noble army—a nobler army never was assembled in India. With ordinary guidance it is fit to sweep India from Peshawar to Cape Comorin If this army shall be repulsed, if its confidence lost, and the war protracted, it will be by the incomptency of the officer who has been retained in the command I beg also respectfully add that I will not submit to the Government of India being condemned and my reputation destroyed in silence, but will not conceal the fact that such a result will he attributable to the incapacity of the instrument by which I have been compelled to act."[1]

The news of the action at Chillianwala and the fall of Multan reached London at the same time. Whitehall informed Dalhousie: "But the disaster (at Chillianwala) has thrown the success (at Multan) into shade—and the impression made upon public mind has been stronger than that caused hy the Cahul massacre The result has been, that, in eight and forty hours after the arrival of the mail, it was decided to send Sir Charles Napier to command the India Army"[2]

In this manner, and under the shadow cast hy the disaster of Chillianwala, Dalhousie had won his private war. A distasteful sequel to it was an angry controversy between Dalhousie and the Home Government which is described at its proper place.

11. Suggestions from home

Meanwhile, Lord Dalhousie's despatches justifying annexation, had come under further consideration of Lord John Russell's Government. But although the Cabinet seemed positively disinclined to take such a drastic step, a policy of drift and hesitation was followed hy the Board and the Secret Committee.[3] Persons closer to the Cabinet and those with intimate knowledge of the Punjab—Auckland, Ellenborough, Hardinge, Henry Lawrence and others, were all adverse to annexation Consequently, both Sir James Lushington, the Chairman of the E I. Co , and Sir John Hobhouse wrote to Dalhousie that the Cabinet did not share his views of taking a drastic step which would convert the Punjab into

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1 *Ibid*

2. Hobhouse to Dalhousie (Private), 7 March 1849 *Dal Mun* Sec 6 (55-58)

3 Contrary to the Cabinet's views the India Board gave a free hand to Dahlousie in the matter 'I can assure you,' the President wrote to him on 23 October, "on the part of the Government, that if you should feel yourself compelled by the urgency of the case to adopt that, or any important change, without waiting for the sanction of the Home Authorities the most favourable construction would be put upon your proceedings."

a British province. However any measure short of annexation—"subjugation without the name" would be well received. A suggestion was also made to end the treaty with the State of Lahore. To modify the Governor-General's views, it was decided that Henry Lawrence should immediately return to the Punjab.[1]

With these suggestions Dalhousie did not agree. He awaited Henry Lawrence's arrival with some concern: "I shall be dishonest if I said this, without adding, that nothing he can say can alter my convictions as to the substantial policy to be pursued."[2] The abrogation of the treaty was considered impracticable, for, under its cover the British army had entered the Punjab, and from it the British Resident at Lahore derived supreme authority in the State. The Government of India, therefore, igoored the suggestion.

Therefore, undeterred by what the Home Government would eventually decide, Dalhousie turned to the Board, at whose hint he eschewed all referenee to the subject in his despatches to the Seeret Committee. His private despatches to its President, Sir John Hobhouse are revealing in this respect. He emphasised mainly two points—*first*, that the insurrection was a general risiog of the Sikhs against the British power.[3] *Secondly*, he pointed out that the subversion of the Sikh power in the country had become essential to the seeurity of India.[4] Yet, main objections to Dalhoosie's proposals appeared both political and moral. Politically, it was conceded by the Board that a departure from the existing policy was desirable though not essential. Military opinion in London was against the occupation of a country which it would be difficult to maintain.[5]

12. Answer to a moral dilemma

But if politically annexation lacked conviction and expediency, on moral grounds there were still stronger objections to it. All seemed to agree that advantage should not be taken of the ionoeence of the Maharaja, and that he should not be made to suffer for the misdeeds of others.[6]

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1. Hobhouse to Dalhousie, 23 October, 1848-*Dal. Mun.* Sec. 6 (55-58).
2. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 22 December, 1848-Broughton (BM), *op. cit.*, *fol.* 300a.
3. Dalhousie to Hobhouse (Private), 19 September, 1848-Broughton (BM), *op. cit.*, *fol.* 235ab.
4. *Ibid.* 1 October, 1848, *op. cit fol.* 251b-255b.
5. Hobhouse to Dalhousie (Private), 23 October, 1848- *Dal. Mun.* Sec. 6 (55-58).
6. *Ibid.* 23 October, 1848 *op. cit,*

The hint had been thrown out by Lord Auckland, who during the discussions in the Cabinet had denounced the measure as breach of faith on the part of the British Government. Auckland's argument based on the minority of the Maharaja was unanswerable But on 22 December, Dalhousie met it in quite an extraordinary manner. "There is no greater enemy to annexation than I" He wrote. "I yield to a conviction of its necessity, not to an opinion of its desirableness. There are many objections, but of all objections that which is founded on the minority of the Maharaja is the feeblest and puniest That old women and young ladies should say "Poor little fellow" is all very well but a man of vigorous understanding like Lord Anckland should rest his foot on such a ground, a ground so utterly repudiated by the laws of nations and inconsistent with a firm view of great public interest is marvellous indeed to me Above all it is inconceivable that the recognition of such a principle should be introduced into the discussion of statesmen for the first time in the case of Dalip Singh—a child notoriously surreptitous, a brat begotten of a *Bahishti*,* and no more the son of old Runjeet Singh than Queen Victoria is "Wah ! Wah !" as the Sikhs exclaim : for I can find no exclamation of wonder in the English language sufficiently strong, on hearing this doctrine broached in the Cabinet."[1]

To this Hobhouse replied early in February : "I see you laugh at Lord Auckland's regard for the young Maharaja But I am sure on little reflection, you will agree with me that it does not signify a rush whose child this Dhuleep may be Had he been only the adopted instead of the putative son of Ranjeet Singh, his claim upon us would be just the same"[2] Moral scruples, however, are no substitute for public conscience These academic discussions were soon forgotten under the stress of unforeseen events after the battle of Gujrat

13 Sequel to Multan

Multan fell on 2 January, and Mulraj surrendered unconditionally to Major General Whish An interesting sequel to it, apart from the unpalatable scramble between Dalhousie, Gough and John Lawrence to apportion the prize money to the Army of the Punjab, or the Bengal and Bombay Columns,[3] was what to do with him Dalhousie felt a bit

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* A water carrier

1 Dalhousie to Hobhouse (Private) 22 December, 1848-Broughton (BM), *op cit.*, fol 200a *ff*

2 Hobhouse to Dalhousie 7 February, 1949 *Dal Mun op cit*

3 Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 7 February, 1849 Broughton (BM), *op cit.*, fol. 376a

embarrassed that he had not met his end in the fort. His complicity in the murder of the British officers could not be proved. He could be hanged as a rebel, but his execution would shock public opinion in India. The papers relating to Mulraj's trial (May 1849) have been published.[1] The sentence of death pronounced by a Commission presided over by Mansel, was commuted by the Governor-General on a hint from the India Board.[2] Accordingly, Dalhousie informed the home authorities: ".....if he could not be proved guilty, I think of sending him across the seas. The natives dread this punishment worse than death, and we should avoid by it the shedding of the blood." Mulraj died on his way to the Andamans in August 1851.

14. The Afgban intervention

Perhaps, the most curious phenomenon of the Punjab Campaign was the intervention of the Afghans on the side of the Sikhs. The Barakzai Amir, having almost forgotten the lessons of defeat and humiliation of a decade earlier, still cherished to repossess the Afghan northern provinces. Lured by Chattar Singh with an offer of Peshawar, still a key to the Afghan national pride, Dost Muhammad marched down from the hills of Kabul as an ally of the Sikhs, and declared a limited *jehad* on the *firangees*. He was met at Peshawar by Chattar Singh, but what transpired between them is not fully known.[3] A son of the Amir with 1,500 Afghan irregulars joined the rebels, while another took possession of Bannu.[4] Dost Muhammad tarried at Peshawar; he revived claims to the former Afghan possessions—Kashmir, Peshawar, the Derajat and Hazara, which frightened the Sikhs; and his exhortations to the Kandahar Chiefs to march on Sind, annoyed the British.[5] Although he wavered in his allegiance to the Sikhs, he fought the British at Gujrat, and ingloriously fled northwards.

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1. (P)-No 14 (1932)

2 "In regard to the late Dewan Mulraj," Hobbouse had suggested, "you are quite right about that gentleman It would never do to put him to death. It would be better to send him across the seas for life than to hang him." No convincing evidence of his guilt could ever be established, he was therefore recommended for mercy as "the victim of circumstances," and deported for life "with a fate perhaps as terrible as death." Dalhousie, 14 July, 1849, *op. cit.*

3. Abbott's report (*vide*. Secret Letter, 7 February, 1849, No. 9- BISL(I) that Dost Muhammad agreed to hire out to Chattar Singh Afghan troops for a paltry sum of 60,000 rupees does not appear to carry any weight in view of the claims made by him over the territories of the Sikhs.

4. Dalhousie to Couper (Private), 5 February, 1849-CHP.

5. *Ibid.*, also LPD, iv-14 and 30 December, 1848.

The entry of the Afghans on the scene of operations had created a mild flutter at Fort William. Peshawar must not be allowed to fall into Afghan hands and Dost Muhammad should not be allowed to befriend his former foes. A Sikh-Afghan combination would be a serious calamity. The puny Afghan intrusion which was unnecessarily magnified as an invasion from the west, however, evaporated after the battle of Gujrat. "Dost Mubammad," commented Lord Dalhousie, "came like a thief, and he has run away like a coward. I have thought that the ignominy with which he has been chased from Peshawar is sufficient for our purpose."[1]

15 Musings after Chillianwala

Chillianwala had proved that the Sikh artillery strength was still formidable, and that British actions were launched in undue haste, without thought of consequences. At any rate, British artillery had failed to provide cover, and Campbell's two brigades having failed to act in unison, had caused the destruction of Pennycuick's brigade. The sudden flight of Pope's cavalry could not be explained, but an impression was created that the Khalsa *ghorcharas* were deadly when on familiar terrain. The disaster to Gilbert's brigade was attributable to Lane's cavalry having failed to come out in support. Gough was blamed for the reverse, but Dalhousie's interference in the campaign which had left him little independence of action, was not taken into account. The India Board charged the General with incompetency. The Duke made the cryptic observation for his failure to employ the artillery in the battlefield: "they are not masters of their game." The critics at home dubbed him as "a superannuated general, who could not mount his horse without assistance, and who was irascible and wedded to ancient notions of cavalry manoeuvres."

While these charges were in the air, the report of Sir Charles Napier's appointment reached Lord Dalhousie. Private advices from Sir John Hobhouse, the Duke of Wellington and Lord John Russell encouraged him to continue unabated his private war against the Commander-in-Chief.[2] The tenor of further complaints made to the Home Government was that whereas the Sikh army was regrouping on the banks of the Jehlum, the British operations were still confined to

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1 Broughton (BM) *fol* 479b

2. After what has happened" wrote the British Prime Minister confidentially to the Governor General "I should advise your Lordship if you have not already done so to place the command in the hands of some officer in whom the troops should have full confidence." *Dal Mun.* Sec. 6 (55-58)

the Chenab [1] The Sikhs were on the move to Khoree on the left of the British flaok On the 12th the rest of the Sikh troops with 25 guns having left Rasul had formed junction with the forces at Khoree "On the morning of 15th, the Sikh army was at Goozrat and Wuzeerabad, with a portion of their force across hut the Commaoder io Chief was still at Chilliaowala "[2]

Gough had no direct knowledge of these accusations, hut he refused to he hrowheaten hy the Governor General's insolent hints He listened to the represeotations made hy the Governor General s political officers, hut replied that it was his ioteotioo to wait for the large scale reinforcements ordered from Multao, which would gave him a decided superiority over the enemy

16 Gujrat The Battle of Guns

On 13 February Whish's Column (13,400 men and 30 pieces of heavy artillery) reached Ramoagar The Bomhay Column (12,100 men aod 3,000 cavalry) joined the Army of the Puojah, a few days later Thus, assured of an overwhelmiog superiority of men and heavy artillery, Gough ordered the entire force forward, aod four days later reaching the village of Shadewal, 5 miles south of Gujrat, he came face to face with the Sikh force.

The Commaoder-in Chief's suddeo movement surprised Lord Dalhousie, but he threw his last harh at him Writing in the most discourteous manner, he threateoed him with summary dismissal if, "in his persisteot obstioacy," he failed to use his guns and fought an incomplete action "I shall not leave him," he reported to the India Board angrily, "to demoralise the army he commands, and this he is rapidly doing' [3] He further forbade him to cross the Jehlum, nominating General Gilbert to be in commaod of the force which would cross tbat river [4] Gough took strongest exceptioo to the insolent tone of the letter, he stopped all private communications with the Governor-General, and proceeded forthwith to Jehlum

Sher Singh's army now reinforced hy Chattar Singh's force and an Afgban contigent of 3,000 horse under Akram Khan, encircled the strategic town of Gujrat [5] The regular Sikh troops were placed in the

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1 Dalhousie 21 February 1849 Broughton (BM) *op cit*
2 *Ibid*
3 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 21 February 1849 Broughton (BM) *op cit*
4 *Ibid*
5 *Ibia* 6 March, 1849 Broughton (BM), *op cit* The Sikh intention of

centre, between the town and the deep dry bed of the river Dwara, which passed round nearly two sides of the town and then ran south through the centre of the ground at Shadewal The Sikh position on the right was greatly strengthened, the *nullah* giving cover to their infantry in front of their guns Another deep and narrow watercourse eastwards falling into the Chenab towards Wazirabad covered their left, where in the village of Burra Kalra, a large body of infantry was concentrated *The 4 mile wide open ground between the two watercourses was well* suited to all forces, the Sikh artillery was streched on the *nullahs*, their cavalry on both the flanks

The battle of Gujrat fought on 21 February, 1849 must be regarded as one of the most memorable in the annals of British warfare in India[1] Never perhaps had the British amassed so many guns and men in any single battle[2] Lord Gough placed on the extreme left the Bombay Column (Dundas) supported by a brigade of cavalry and

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crossing the Chenab and marching on to Lahore cannot be accepted for the simple reason that Whish's force barred their passage below Wazirabad and with the arrival of the Bombay Column all hopes if any, of their entry into the Rechna Doab were lost A portion of their force was separated from the rest having crossed the Jehlum while their main army 20 000 strong moved upon Gujrat

1 Governor General to Secret Committee, 7 March 1849-BISL (1) No 13

2 The figures shown below justify this statement The total British army, inclusive of the Lahore force amounted to 56 636 men of all arms 11, 569 cavalry, 96 field and 67 siege guns

THE ARMY OF THE PUNJAB (21 February 1849)

(1)	*1st Division* (Maj Gen Whish) inclusive of the Lahore force under Courtland and Imam Bux			13 400
	Cavalry			5 000
	Artillery 67 siege and 30 field guns			
(2)	2nd *Division* (Maj Gen Sir Walter Gilbert)			5 248
(3)	*3rd Division* (Brig Gen C Campbell)			8 171
(4)	*Bombay Column* (Hon Brig Gen H Dundas)			
	4 reg of Eur Infan	4 000		
	9 reg of N I	8 100		
	5 reg of Cav	3 000		15 100
(5)	*Troops* at *Ramnagar*			1 837
(6)	*Cavalry Division*			
	1st Brigade (White)	2 006		
	2nd Brigade (Pope)	1,563		3 569
(7)	*Artillery Division* (Brig Tannaut)			
	6 troops horse artillery	36 guns	420 men	
	3 field batteries	18 guns	180 men	
	2 heavy batteries	12 guns	120 men	

Sinde Horse, troops of horse artillery coveriog the iofantry. Oo its right was the 3rd Infaotry Divisioo (Camphell) covered hy light field batteries and a hrigade of infaotry in reserve. To the right stood the 2od Infaotry Division (Gilhert). The heavy field guos having heen dispersed hetweeo the two divisions, the lioe was prolonged hy the lst Infaotry Division (Whish) aod a second line formed in support of the whole covered hy troops of horse artillery. The cavalry hrigades (White aod Pope) aod the horse artillery protected the right ; the light cavalry with Bomhay light field hatteries protected the rear and haggage.

At half-past eight the whole British army advanced with the precision of a parade movemeot.[1] The Sikh guos opened up disclosing their position and range. The British geoeral hrought the three divisioos to a sudden halt aod ordered the advance of the whole line of artillery—left, right and centre. The caooooade of 100 guos which oow opened up was deserihed as "magoificient and terrific io its effects."[2] The Sikh artillery replied with its accustomed rapidity, hut the terrific fire of British 18-pouoders and 8-ioch howitzers hroke up their ohstinate resistance. No iofantry movement took place for nearly two hours. The hatteries of the lst aod 2nd Divisioos ioched forward to 600 yards and heavy field guos to 800 yards of the Sikh lines, hreakiog up their raoks and takiog up forward positions.[3]

When the guos on hoth sides had speot their fury, the British infaotry line advanced rapidly aod drove the Sikhs hefore it. The Sikh positioos at Burra Kalra and Chota Kalra where their iofantry was concentrated, were quickly captured and the Sikhs driven out of cover.

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(8) *Force at Lahore* / *Under Wheeler*

5 reg. N.I.	4,321	2 reg. N.I.	1,937	
1 tr. horse art.	131	1 tr. horse art.	126	
3 Cos F. art.	311	Lt. cav.	197	
1 Co. Pioneers.	115	F. art.	973	
1tr. cav.	659	Lt. cav.	541	3,774

Total : Infantry 56,636
Cavalry 11,569
Artillery 96 field guns and 67 siege guns (inclusive of 10 18-pounders and 6 8-inch howitzers drawn by elephants)

1. Lord Gough's Despatch, 21 February, 1849 from the battlefield- (PP) XLI, 1849. No 49 (3).
2. *Ibid.*
3. Brig Gen. Tennaut, Commanding Artillery Division to Adjutant General, 22 February, 1849- (PP), *op. cit.*, No. 49 (6).

Within an hour the battle was over Dalhousie reported the outcome: "A sustained cannonade of three hours, compelled them to retire from their positions which they had maintained with resolute hardihood The subsequent advance of the whole British line drove them back, at once, from every point, and, retreat speedily becoming rout, they fled in utmost disorder—'their ranks broken (the C in-C writes), 'their positions carried, their guns, ammunition, camp equipage and luggage captured, their flying masses driven before the victorious pursuers, from midday to dusk, receiving most severe punishment in their flight'."[1]

The Sikh loss was estimated between 3,000-5,000 men and 53 guns, the British casualties were 96 killed and 700 wounded "The Sikhs," commented Lord Dalhousie afterwards, "displayed the skill, the courage and activity which belong to their race"[2]

At long last the British general had retrieved his reputation by a decisive and complete victory "I think," wrote Dalhousie grudgingly, "that the Commander in Chief of the army may justly feel that he has gained a victory calculated, as much as any that has ever been won in India" Soon afterwards, General Gough resigned his command

1 Governor-General to Secret Committee 7 March 1849 BISL(I) No 13
2. Dalhousie to the Queen 7 March 1849- Broughton (BM) *fol* 438a

CHAPTER XX

EPILOGUE ANNEXATION AND AFTER, 1849

1 Return of Henry Lawrence

The final outcome of the battle of Gujrat had somewhat cleared the atmosphere at the Governor General's headquarters at Ferozepur The return of Henry Lawrence to the Lahore Residency in February 1849, however, had led to a clash of opinion on political issues Although Lawrence was decidedly averse to the policy of annexation,[1] the India Board had hoped that his intimate knowledge of the Sikhs, would be of great use in shaping the policy ultimately to be adopted towards the Punjab[2] Dalhousie awaited his arrival with a settled prejudice "Lawrence" he wrote to Sir George Couper on 5 February, "had been greatly praised, rewarded and petted, and no doubt naturally supposes himself as the king of the Punjab"[3] To Hobhouse he reported 'He is not unnaturally, biased in favour of these people He is in short, *plus Sikh que les Sikhs*'[4]

A clash of opinion occurred immediately after Lawrence's assumption of charge at Lahore when he issued a proclamation announcing his return and an expression of hope that peace would soon be restored in the Punjab Dalhousie forbade the proclamation "He thinks us all," he wrote angrily to the Home Government, "I have no doubt, a parcel of blockheads and says that everything except himself was wrong I spoke to him with entire candour, and told him what were my convictions and intentions He now admits the justice of annexation, but disputes its expediency I don't dispute the inexpediency of annexation but I recognise the necessity, and told him that if such were the ultimate determination of the Government, he must be prepared to act cordially in carrying its measures into effect'[5]

Soon afterwards, Lawrence's proposal to restore rani Jindan to the Punjab produced a sharp retort from the Governor General that such an act would be followed by his own recall and the Resident's

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1 Hobhouse to Dalhousie 23 October 1848 *Dal Mun* Sec 6 (55-58)
2 *Ibid* 24 February 1849 *op cit*
3 Dalhousie to Couper (Private) 5 February, 1849 CHP
4 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 6 March 1849 Broughton (BM) *op cit*
5 *Ibid*

dismissal "You will see, we shall get on very well," he informed the President of the Board, "now that he has learnt that he must be content to be a Resident or Commissioner, not a Potentate "[1]

2 Capitulation of rebel army

The decisive British victory at Gujrat had spelled the doom for the rebels Sher Singh fled towards Jehlum with the remnants of his shattered force Early next morning, General Gilbert with a large force started in pursuit of the retreating Sikhs, who had destroyed all boats on the left bank of the river and after reaching the strong fortress of Rohtas, had ultimately decided to abandon it They posted themselves at Bukreala Pass as if to dispute it, but eventually fled northwards in the direction of Rawalpindi

The rebel Sikh army was broken, and all hopes of a Khalsa victory gone The retreat soon turned into a rout The Khalsa free lance and the disbanded soldiery, who had joined the rebels in the north, fled south homewards leaving Sher Singh and Chatter Singh to fend for themselves The Afghan allies of the Sikhs deserted them, having hastily withdrawn from Haznra and elsewhere and proceeded towards the hills of Afghanistan Gillbert's troops in pursuit found at a distance of 12 miles, the track strewn with the wounded Sikh soldiers and their arms and equipment, which they had thrown away [2]

Sher Singh now offered to lay down arms Major George Lawrence who was held prisoner in Chattar Singh's camp, was released on parole and was sent to Gilbert's camp at Jehlum to negotiate terms Although no terms of unconditional surrender could be agreed to, Lawrence brought back an assurance that the rebels would not be put to death or deported to India [3]

On 7 March Gilbert pushed on from Jehlum, following the Sikh army, who had carried the British prisoners with them Sher Singh reached Rawalpindi, beyond which his troops would not go They were unpaid, starving and disheartened On 10 March, the rebel leaders surrendered to General Gilbert at Harmuk, on the left bank of the Sohan river Sardar Sher Singh, Chattar Singh and several other Sardars arrived in the General s camp and gave up their swords The whole Sikh army, 16,000 strong marched between the British columns, and laid down their arms Forty-one guns and 20,000 stand of arms were given up By the end of the Campaign, therefore, the British had

1 *Ibid*

2 Gough's Despatch 26 February 1849 (PP) XLI 1849

3. Dalhousie to Hobhouse 6 March, 1849 Broughton (BM), *op cit*

captured 56 guns at Gujrat, 41 at Harmuk, 12 at Chillanwala and 50 at Multan—a total of 159 pieces of ordnance

3 Mode of surrender

The annexation of the Punjab, as we shall see, took place without any directions of the Home Government A Proclamation issued by the Governor-General on 29 March, 1849, declared that the Kingdom of the Punjab was at an end, and all the territories of Maharaja Dalip Singh had become a portion of the British Empire in India [1] "It was impossible for me," he explained soon afterwards, "after reviewing the question of future relations with the Punjab to report the matter to you and wait for instructions "[2]

To arrange the preliminaries of annexation, Henry Lawrence was kept out of the way Sir Henry Elliot, Secretary to the Government of India, who was selected for the purpose, on arrival at Lahore discovered that no member of the Council of Regency was willing to sign the formal acceptance of the terms Lawrence protested against the irregularity of the procedure, and pointed out that as the President of the Council, he would not advise them to accept it Further arguments were, however, cut short by Elliot's threat to the members of the Council, particularly Tej Singh and Dina Nath, who ultimately coerced the remaining members to sign it "I have instructed Mr Elliot," admitted Dalhousie, "if the signatures were refused, to issue the Proclamation at once The only difference would have been that the Maharaja and all of them would have no guarantee of jagirs or anything else from us , and to secure these advantages, the Regency bowed to the necessity more pliably than I had anticipated.' [3]

The mode of surrender was based on a precedent and the Paper of Terms drawn up on the lines of a similar document executed by the Peshwa in 1818 It was first signed by the Council of Regency , and in a Darbar held on 1 April, 1849, the young Maharaja put his signatures pathetically, and surrendered to his guardians, the Kingdom of Ranjit Singh "It appears to me," commented Dalhousie sarcastically, "that to obtain a surrender such as this would shut out carping objections which might hereafter be made by himself or his successors Either way we were in truth taking his kingdom from him *by force*, and the parchment only gave it more formality "[4]

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1 (PP) XLI 1849

2 Dalhousie to Hobhouse **(Private)** 7 April 1849 Broughton (BM) *op cit fol* 498a

3 *Ibid.* 14 July 1849-Broughton (BM), *op cit*

4 *Ibid*

A pension of 120,000 rupees—("a liberal one, but he is a boy and the Sardars think so! Next year, he must go") was provided for the minor Maharaja. "I am sorry for him, poor little fellow," observed Dalhousie ruefully, "although it is a superfluous compassion. He does not care two pence about it himself. He will have a good and regular stipend ("without income tax!") all his life, and will die in his bed like a gentleman, which under other circumstances, he certainly would not have done!"[1]

4 Crown property

The total expenses of the Punjab Campaign having amounted to £ 1,500,000, crown property of Maharaja Dalip Singh estimated at *15,000,000 rupees was declared to be confiscated to the East India* Company to realise the above *sum* In addition, the Maharaja was made to surrender, as a token of submission to the Queen of England, the famous *Koh i-Nur* diamond—"the historical Emblem of Conquest of India"[2]

The matter raised an interesting controversy in England The Court of Directors without openly objecting to the cession of the diamond to the Queen of England, murmured against its being excepted from confiscation to the Company Lord Dalhousie's "affectionate friends" at Leadenhall Street reacted in a different manner. They did not object to the propriety of the confiscation of crown property to the Company, but to the fact that it could not be regarded as booty to be handed over to the troops With regard to the controversy over the *Koh i Nur* diamond, Dalhousie observed sarcastically "The Court you say, are ruffed up by my having caused the Maharaja to cede to the Queen the *Koh i-Nur*, while the *Daily News* and my Lord Ellen*borough are indignant because I did not confiscate everything to Her* Majesty, I am like 'a bundle of hay between two asses' In the meantime, while the Court is growling (inarticulately) at my having excepted the *Koh i-Nur* from confiscation to the Company, up jumps my Lord Ellenborough and says, 'What business has this Governor-General to confiscate anything to the Company? It belongs to the Queen, and the army have a right to demand it, and I tell you it is *dangerous* to refuse it!'"[3]

Against this ludicrous background arguments were continued till

1 *Ibid* 7 April, 1849 Broughton (BM), *op cit*, *fol* 503a
2 *Ibid*
3. Dalhousie to George Couper, 16 August, 1849 CHP.

the squabbe subsisded, and Dalhousie carried the day "With regard to the *Koh i Nur*, I cao't pretend to a precedent I do not recollect any subject bas falleo oo the good fortune of seoding so precious and so storied a trophy of war as the *Koh i Nur* It was questionably within my competence to do so as I did, subject to the confirmation at home The Country was conquered, tbe Dynasty destroyed, and all state property coofiscated "[1]

5 Furore over Gough

The battle of Gujrat bad ended tbe Punjab Campaign, but oot so Lord Dalhousie's private war against bis Commander in Chief The victor of Sobraoo and Gujrat bad resigned bis command "like a gentleman without sligbtest reference to bis differences with the Governor-General "[2] Dalhousie continued repeating bis accusations against tbe general Nobody, however, gave thougbt to the offences given by tbe Governor Geoeral, aod Gough had igoored the insults fluog, aod the gross aod unwarraoted ioterference in tbe conduct of operatioos, when be suffered to lay dowo his commaod But oot so Dalhousie Io the flusb of victory be charged the Goveromeot aod the Court for lack of support aod the reteotion of Gougb in bis command agaiost bis wisbes

For tbis Lord Dalhousie received, perbaps, tbe sbarpest rebuff of bis public life in India Sir John Russell prudeotly left the unpalatable task to Hobbouse The President of tbe Board most vehemeotly deored Dalhousie's charges for lack of governmeotal support to him Regarding the continuance of Gougb's command, he coofrooted the Goveroor General with passages from his own despatches to the Secret Committee aod the Court, which proved beyond doubt that till the beginning of the Punjab operations, Dalhousie had not expressed the slightest dissatisfaction about Gougb's retention in command, but had spoken of him in terms of appreciation[3] He further accused him of communicating these frivolous charges against the Cabinet and the Government in his private correspondence to others in England

Of Lord Dalhousie's unwillingness to suffer in silence the destruction of his reputation on account of his Commander io Chief, Hobbouse

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1 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 14 July 1849 Broughton (BM) *op cit*

2 Hobhouse to Dalhouse (Private) 21 April 1849 *Dal Mun* Sec 6 (55 58)

3 Hohhouse to Dalhousie (Private) 7 March 1849 *Dal Mun op cit* At the end of this letter follow copies of Lord Dalhousie s correspondence urging the retention of Sir Hugh Gough as the Commander-in-Chief of the army of India.

bit back "A public man is quite right not to submit in silence, as you tell me you will not do, to the destruction of his reputation, but surely, his first concern should not be for himself, nor should be his chief object to guard against insinuations He should have higher aims and nobler objectives, and with such aims and motives, be may feel tolerably certain that inspite of misrepresentations, public justice will be done to him at last "[1]

The Squire of Frogmore quailed under the blow He wrote to Sir George Couper on 1 May. "By last mail I had a most offensive letter from Hobhouse in reply to one I wrote after Chillianwala, imputing me, on rumour, that I have written home declaring that the Government retained Lord Gough in his command against my insistence, that I had complained to others for want of support from Government and various other things I replied on 22nd denying the whole His letter was insolent and ungentlemanlike in the worst degree I told Fox Maule that while John Russell, writing to me on the same day, addressed me like a gentleman, Sir John Hobhouse addressed me as no gentleman would address his gamekeeper, and that if I listened only to private feeling, and not to public duty, I would not remain a day under this man's orders The more I think of it, the more furious I get, and I shall never forget it [2]

Dismissal of Cunningham

Debate on the Vote of Thanks in both Houses of Parliament went off very well, but although, the Tory Opposition—both the Protectionists and the Peelites were very civil about it,[3] a discordant note was struck in the House of Commons by a member, George Thompson, who had given notice demanding a discussion of the Punjab policy of Lord John Russell's Whig Government Breeze in Parliament over the matter, however, resulted in a personal tragedy for Captain *J D* Cunningham, the historian of the Sikhs Thompson had accused the Government of suppression of documents in the Blue Book presented to Parliament, he made a pointed reference to Cunningham's recently published *History of the Sikhs* which referred to despatches in the Secret Department previously suppressed by Lord Broughton.[4]

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1 *Ibid*

2 Dalhousie to Couper (Private) 1 May, 1849 CHP

3. Referring to the Vote of Thanks for obvious reasons Dalhousie commented I don't think I am under any obligation to Hobhouse He repeated the old refrain of 54 000 men and toadying Lord Hardinge (who as I know from his Lordship himself, had been at him) To Couper 9 June 1849. CHP

4 Hobhouse to Dalhousie (Private) 21 April, 1849 *ut supra*

Lest old skeltons may come out of the India Board's cupboard, and unpalatable facts made public, Hobhouse wrote at once to the Governor General "I learn that his (Thompson's) chief reliance is on a grand for nothing book published by one of your functionaries—I mean Captain Cunningham, your Resident at Bhopal I have looked into it unwillingly, and find passages in it, besides allusions to despatches in the Secret Department If these letters have not been published in parliamentry document, I would recommend you call him to account for breach of trust and remove him from his post'[1]

In the Blue Book presented to Parliament in April 1849, Lord Dalhousie's Minute of 30 September, 1848 on Annexation and some other documents had been designedly omitted[2] The Governor General acted most promptly on the orders received soon after from the Court A little earlier Major Carmichael Smyth had been publicly reprimanded for his "infamous book' the *Reigning Family of Lahore*,[3] but towards Cunningham a sterner course had to be adopted ("the case is a gross one and the example will be wholesome!)[4] Consequently, Cunningham was charge-sheeted for abuse of trust and soon after he was dismissed from service

Though Cunningham's dismissal was ostensibly for using official papers without authority, the Press made comments that his removal was brought about on account of the disagreeable comments against the Government All Captain Cunningham says,' ran the comments, 'we now know is based on authentic public papers, therefore, it must all be true![5]

7 Background to Annexation

The policy of annexation advocated by Lord Dalhousie in his Minute of 30 September, 1848 had found little support at Whitehall Public and private opinion in England being adverse to it, the British Cabinet held that it lacked conviction Sir Henry Lawrence considered

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1 *Ibid P S* to the above letter dated 29 April 1849

2 *Vide* ISP (I) 7 October 1848 Writing privately to Dalhousie Hobhouse admitted I was obliged to omit an admissible despatch of yours because it contained a decided opinion in favour of annexation and have studiously avoided inserting anything which could compromise you or ourselves in respect of future policy

3 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 25 May 1849- Broughton(BM) *op cit*

4 *Ibid* 15 June 1849 *op cit*

5 *Ibid* 6 September 1849 *op cit*

it unnecessary [1] The Chairman of the Court of Directors, Sir James Lushington, was not only opposed to the measure, but he had accused the President of the Board of indirectly encouraging the Governor-General without authority to embark upon that step [2] Lord Auckland's opposition to such a sweeping measure was based on three main grounds—military, financial and moral "We shall be ill able," he said, "to vindicate an infliction of forfeiture on the young boy, for the troubles and disappointments which have occured under our administration" [3] Sir Claude Wade and others had also given similar opinions against annexation Lord John Russell had, therefore, directed the India Board to request the Government of India to submit a detailed report on its administrative and financial aspects, and issue a directive to the Governor-General forbidding him to take any steps in the matter without authority [4]

In accordance with these discussions, the Secret Committee had issued instuctions to the Governor General The India Board, however, acted in a half hearted and dubious manner Although it conveyed to the Governor General the sentiments of the British Cabinet, yet it suggested to him "I am glad that your last secret letter says nothing in regard to the future settlement of the Punjab *First catch your hare !*" At the same time, he was told, that the entire question would be re-considered and the opinion of Government of India reported home before any final arrangement was made [5]

Encouraged thus by the India Board against the opinion held by the British Cabinet, Dalhousie informed the Board that his convictions as to the policy to be pursued in the Punjab *remained* unaltered In February 1849, he was again warned by the Board that public opinion in England was still averse to it To this Dalhousie replied on 21 February in a private communication " we shall close the war this year. Should we do so, the future must be settled I shall obey the orders of the Secret Committee, and that *I shall review* the question of policy I can't think that either you or the authorities at the India House will entertain any doubt as to what it will be my duty to do on your behalf" [6]

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1 Hobhouse to Sir John Russell 14 October, 1848 Broughton (I) 847, *fol* 19 also Hobhouse to Dalhousie 23 October 1849 *Dal Mun op cit*

2 Lushington to Hobhouse 7 October 1848 Broughton (I) 852 *fol* 21 *sq*

3 Auckland to Hobhouse 30 October 1848 Broughton (I) 846 *fol* 30 *ff*

4 Hobhouse to Dalhousie (Private) 23 October 1848 *ut supra*

5 *Ibid.*, particularly Hobhouse's private letters of 23 October 7 and 24 November 7 December, 1848 and 6 January 1849 *op cit*

6 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 21 February 1849 Broughton (BM) *op cit*

But although silence was maintained in public despatches, Dalhousie freely referred to the matter to his friends in England "The people and newspapers cannot make out," he wrote sardonically, "not nowhow what I nm going to do with the Punjah ? They are divertingly peevish, and hecause I won't tell them what my mind is, they tell me I don't know my mind myself I do though !"[1]

On 29 March, Dalhousie took the final step without any authority from the Home Government He wrote to Sir George Couper the following day "The Council of Regency and the Maharaja signed their submission to the British power, surrendering the *Koh i-Nur* to the Queen of England, the British colours hoisted oa the citadel of Lahore, and the Punjah, every inch of it, was proclaimed to be a portion of the British Empire ia India "[2] While this hold and drastic step in defianee of the orders of the Home Government was taken, he added significantly "I shall nwait the decision of the country with perfect tranquillity If the Government disapproves my act, you will see me at Frogmore hefore the summer is over "[3]

Meanwhile, still unaware that the final step had already heen takea hy the Government of India, the Home Government requested Lord Dalhousie to forward his deliherate opinion on "the great question" for examination of the matter[4] On 7 Aoril Lord Dalhousie informed the Board of the *fait accompli* To the Secret Committte, he outlined in detail, the reasons which prompted him to act immediately in the matter It was, he said, impossible for him to report the matter home and wait for further instructions The Government of Lahore was totally disorganised—in fact, no government existed at all, nnd the people expected that ns a naturnl consequence of the war, the country should he annexed He wns, he said, conscientiously convinced of the inevitahle necessity of the nction he had tnken

Such heing the case, he threw out n challenge to the Board "If Her Majesty s Government and the Court think my act wrong nnd mischievous, there is no physical impossihility in the reversal of it If you think what is unjust to the State of Lahore or injurious to the Crown of Britain, let each of you do his duty like a man ! Disallow my net, reverse my policy You will disgrace me of course hut do not let that stand in your way I shall submit quietly to the consequence

1 Dalhousie to Couper (Private) 7 March 1849—CHP
2 *Ibid* 30 March 1849 *op cit*
3 *Ibid*
4 Hobhouse to Dalhousie, 4 April 1849 *Dal Mun* Sec 6 (55-58)

now well satisfied that the disgrace will be temporary, that the time and events will right me, and that a few years will pass, before the course of affairs in the Punjab will prove the correctness of my view and *compel* you to the adoption of the policy I have set up '[1]

When this letter reached London, both Whitehall and Leadenhill Street were surprised by the spirit of its bold defiance Expressing disbelief at Lord Dalhousie's action without the permission of the home authorities the President of the Board wrote on 7 May "I do not quite understand that part of your despatch which relates to the disposal of the Punjab I can hardly believe that you would choose to take a decisive step without previously consulting the home authorities Nor does it appear to me that anything which has happened since you received the letter of the Secret Committee of November 24 requesting you to send your opinion and wait for subsequent instructions, can have induced you to prefer acting on your own responsibility '[2]

8 Escape of Jindan

Meanwhile, it was reported that rani Jindan had escaped from the fortress of Chunar Since her deportation from the Punjab in May 1848 she had been interned at Benares under strict guard, and though a woman of great resolution and ability, she had been content to live on a reduced allowance and restrictions involving ill treatment and indignity During the Punjab campaign however, allegations were made by Major Macgregor, in attendance on her, that she was in correspondence both with Mulraj and Sher Singh A few of her letters were intercepted and an alarm was created when some of her slave girls escaped from Benares On these grounds it was decided to remove her to the fortress of Chunar The manner of her escape could not be ascertained and it was even doubtful whether she had at all arrived there

The news was well received at Calcutta Dalhousie reported home, that her escape had merely caused an annoyance, and the matter was of no importance "I have confiscated her 9 lacs worth of jewels, and she had no money of her own, so that she can't do much harm If she flies to Nepaul and keeps quiet there, it will be a clear gain, for she would lose her pension of course If she goes to the Punjab she can do no mischief now Three months ago it would have been less agreeable '[3]

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1 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 7 April 1849 Broughton (BM) *op cit*
2 Hobhouse to Dalhousie 7 May 1849 *Dal Mun* Sec 6 (55–58)
3 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 2 May 1849 Broughton (BM) *op cit*

Jindan arrived at Kathmandu on 29 April 1849 The Nepalese records tell us that she had escaped from Chuoar in the guise of one of her servants aod with the connivance of the guards. The Nepalese Court held her arrival rather unexpected and undesired, hut Jung Bahadur, the Prime Minister, after some hesitation, granted her asylum mainly in consideration of respect for the memory of late Ranjit Singh. A house was assigned to her on the bank of the Vagmati river, and the Nepalese Government allowed her sufficient income for her maintenaoce.[1]

The British Resident at Kathmandu reported the matter to Calcutta A demand for her surrender was considered inexpedient hecause of a fear of quarrel with Nepal ; the Goveromeot of Iodia conteoted itself hy addressiog a communication to the Court of Nepal to take effective measures to preveot her engaging in political intrigues.[2] The Home Government also expressed delight at her escape. "The flight of the Ranee," Dalhousie was informed, "is just what you call it—rather aonoying thao importaot. In some respects it is rather useful thao otherwise You will get and save money hy it, and he spared of the custody of a cunning, good-for-nothiog womao "[3]

British records relate the details of her rather unhappy sojourn io Nepal till 1860 Although, for political reasons no demand for her surrender could he maḍe, yet the British Resident at Kathmandu was directed to keep a vigilaot eye upon her. Jindan settled in comfort, though not in affluence, in a small house at Thapathali, near Jung Bahadur's residence She devoted herself to a life of religious devotion and charity,[4] hut it soon hecame evident, that the British Residency would not leave her in peace. A whispering campaign soon started against her imaginary conspiracies, and huhhles of political intrigues against the British were hlown up. It was alleged that she was a dangerous woman, engaged in organising political disaffection against the British and the revival of the Sikh dynasty in the Punjah. All this was of course nonsense, hut the steady pressure of the British functionaries in Nepal, led to the gradual antagonisation of the Nepalese Darhar

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1 Nicholette's *Narrative of Principal Events in Nepal* (1849)- *Nepal Residency Papers* (I)

2 Dalhousie to Hobhouse 11 May, 1849 *op cit*

3 India Board Letter 23 June, 1849 (I)

4 A small temple built hy her, close to her residence in Thapathali in Kathmandhu, is still extant

against her, culminating in the imposition of most humiliating restrictions on her [1]

But neither the misdirected zeal of the British officials at Kathmandu, nor the hostility and indifference of the Nepalese Court, could break the spirit of the forlorn widow of Ranjit Singh After a decade of exile and isolation, she still retained her bold and imperious disposition She patiently protested against the indignities and restrictions placed upon her by Jung Bahadur until 1860, when she could brook them no longer [2] As the Nepal Residency records tell us an open rift occurred between her and Maharaja Jung Bahadur, and "several scenes occurred in which each seems to have given way to temper to have addressed the other in very insulting language "[3]

Towards the end of 1860, it was signified to rani the that her son Maharaja Dalip Singh was about to return to India and that she could visit him in Calcutta The rani was tired of living in isolation in Nepal, and being fed up with the indignities imposed upon her by Jung Bahadur, she readily welcomed the opportunity of joining her son, whom she accomapnied in 1861 to England There, two years later, she died

9 *Postscript* Dalip Singh

Details of Maharaja Dalip Singh's life after deposition, can be read more profitably in Lady Logan's frank and affectionate Memoir,[4] and Major Evans Bell's somewhat controversial narrative [5] Lord Dalhousie's private correspondence gives quite interesting details about his conversion to Christianity Soon after annexation, 12 years' old Dalip Singh was removed to Fattehgarh Dr John Logan was put in

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1 Nicholette's *Narrative etc ut supra*

2 These besides others included the desire of Jung Bahadur for her public appearance in the Darbar to acknowledge Nepalese hospitality—which of course she contemptuously refused

3 The Resident's despatch of 25 April (No 20) and 3 October 1860 (No 60) Numerous causes of the rift are related in the public correspondence of the Nepal Residency Papers (I) The present case arose on account of the expulsion from the Valley of one of her attendants named Jagat Rai (whom the Residency records maliciously describe as Jita a *kahar* or bearer by caste, and an old paramour of the rani !) The rani in desperation dismissed the whole of her staff foisted upon her by the Nepalese Government on the advice of the British Resident and demanded that she should have the right and discretion of being served by persons of her own choice from her country

4 *Sir John Logan and Dhuleep Singh* London, 1890

5 *The Annexation of the Punjab and Maharaja Dalip Singh* London 1882.

charge of him, and another Englishman, Walter Guise was appointed his tutor His entourage consisted of a widow of Sher Singh and other Indian attendants with two Englishmen, Barrow and Tommy Scott Of his early days Dalhousie writes "The little Maharaja is an engaging little fellow and he has quite won my heart He appears to be happily enjoying his hawks and his fun and already fond of Dr Logan, the officer who has had charge of him Dr Logan will accompany him to Fattehgurh, on the Ganges in a few days The only remaining member of the royal family—a little child, will go at the same time "[1]

Dalip Singh's life at Fattehgarh is detailed fully in Lady Logan's Memoir In November 1850, he suddenly announced his intention of embracing Christianity, and it appears, that his European entourage had been quite anxious to impress favourably on his mind the ways of Christian faith Dalhousie wrote about it characteristically "The pundits, he says tell him humbug, he has had the Bible read to him and believes in the Sahib's religion He will be a Christian, he says, and he will take tea with Tommy Scott, which caste has hitherto prevented The last cause is a comical point in his profession of faith ! [2]

Opinions may differ, whether Dalip Singh's declaration was the fantasy of a boy, or a deliberate free act brought about under the influence of Christain environments and mode of living dominated by Dr Logan and Walter Guise We have no reason to believe that any deliberate attempt was made to tamper with the mind of the child 'Politically, wrote Dalhousie soon after, "we could desire nothing *better, for it destroys his influence for ever*!" [3]

However, direct encouragement followed Dalhousie wrote to the Maharaja at Fattehgarh "I rejoice to learn that your Highness remains firm in your desire to be instructed in the doctrine of the Bible, and that you have resolved to embrace a faith, whose teaching will increase your happiness in life, and will secure it in another to come "[4]

Shortly afterwards, the Court's approval was obtained for Dalip Singh's gradual instruction in the Christian faith Peremptory orders were issued that there should be no publicity, no flourish, no newspaper paragraphs or articles in the *Missionary Record* Dalip Singh was to

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1 Dalhousie to Couper 15 December, 1849 CHP
2 *Ibid* 3 March 1851 *op cit*
3 *Ibid*
4 Dalhousie to Maharaja Dalip Singh 2 August 1851-*Dal Mun* Sec 6(55 58)

receive instruction in Christian faith "as quietly as if it had been a matter of course "[1]

After a two years' probation, on 8 March, 1853, the young Maharaja was quietly baptised at a private ceremony at Fattehgarh Dalhousie praised his great propriety and judgment in the matter "This is a remarkable event if ever the finger of God wrote upon the wall, it did in the sight of this boy, and the touching of his heart !"[2]

1. Dalhousie to Couper 8 June 1851 CHP
2. *Ibid* 13 March 1853, *op cit*

CRONOLOGY

1792 Accession of Ranjit Singh

1797 Shah Zaman at Lahore
Perron gains ascendency at Delhi

1798 (October) Shah Zaman's second march on Lahore

1799 (July) Ranjit Singh occupies Lahore
George Thomas invades the Sikh country

1800 Expulsion of the Afghans from northern India
British Mission at Ranjit Singh's Court

1801 Ranjit Singh defeats the *Bhangis*

1802 Perron-Ranjit Singh reported alliance
Ranjit Singh occupies Amritsar
Birth of Kharak Singh

1803 End of Maratha influence in northern India
British occupation of Delhi
Cis-Sutlej Sikh chiefs tender allegiance

1804 Sikh disturbances in the Doab

1805 British proclamation of amnesty
Enunciation of British policy towards the Sikhs : the Lumsden Minute
Holkar's intrusion into the Punjab

1806 (1 January) The first Anglo-Sikh Treaty
First Malwa Expedition
Ranjit Singh occupies Ludhiana

1807 The second Malwa Expedition
Lord Minto arrives in India
Cis-Sutlej chiefs confer at Samana

1808 Cis-Sutlej Sikh deputation to Delhi
Ranjit Singh proposes a treaty of alliance
Metcalfe's Mission to Lahore
(October) The third Malwa Expedition

1809 British advance to the Sutlej : occupation of Ludhiana
(9 February) Ochterlony's Proclamation
(25 April) The Treaty of Amritsar
(3 May) British Declaration of Protection
Ranjit Singh conquers Kangra

1809-10 Shah Shuja expelled from Afghanistan
Establishment of Ludhiana Agency
Ranjit Singh meets Shah Shuja

1812 Ochterlony visits Lahore

1813 Ranjit Singh occupies Attock

1814 Shah Shuja granted asylum at Ludhiana

1815 Creation of Nahan and Sabathu sub agencies

1818 Ranjit Singh conquers Multan
Ranjit Singh invades Kashmir

1820 William Moorcroft visits the Punjab

1820-21 The Derajat annexed to Lahore

1821 Birth of Naunibal Singh

1822 The Wadni crisis

1823 The Sikhs march against Peshawar

1826 Dr. Murray at Lahore

1827 (May) Wade's goodwill mission

1831 Burnes' spurious mission up the river Indus
(October) Bentinck-Ranjit Singh meeting at Rupar

1832 (26 December) The Indus Navigation Treaty

1833 The Sikh-Afghan Agreement

1834 Peshawar taken by Ranjit Singh

1835 Occupation of Ladakh by Gulab Singh

1837 (March) Sir Henry Fane visits Lahore
(30 April) The battle of Jamrud
Marriage of Naunihal Singh
Burnes at Kabul

1838 Macnaghten's Mission to Labore
(26 June) The Tripartite Treaty
Shah Shuja restored to Kabul

1839 (27 June) Death of Ranjit Singh
Accession of Kharak Singh
Assassination of Chet Singh

1839-42 The first Anglo-Afghan War

1840 (April) Clerk assumes charge at Ludhiana
(5 November) Death of Kharak Singh and Naunihal Singh

1841 (18 January) Sher Singh proclaimed sovereign
(April) Major Broadfoot's passage across the Punjab
(June) Murder of Mai Chand Kaur
The Sikh Army becomes the *Khalsa*
Zorawar Singh's seizure of Garo and Iskardo
(November) The Kabul Insurrection

1842 The Army of Retribution assembles at Peshawar
End of the Tripartite Treaty
Military Peagent at Ferozepur

1843 British conquest of Sind
Richmond succeeds Clerk at Ludhiana
(15 September) Assassination of Sher Singh
Murder of Dhian Singh
Murder of the Sindhianwalas
Jawahir Singh made prisioner
(September) Army becomes supreme at Lahore
(September) Dalip Singh proclaimed Maharaja

1843-44 Revolt of Kashmira Singh and Peshawara Singh

1844 (March) Revolt of Suchet Singh
(May) Insurrection of Attar Singh and Bhai Bir Singh
The Ferozepur Mutiny
(21 May) Assassination of Pundit Jalla and Hira Singh
(June) Gulab Singh's overtures to the British
(July) Recall of Lord Ellenborough
(November) Broadfoot assumes charge at the N W F. Agency

1845 (March) The chastisement of Gulab Singh
(May) Nomination of Jawahir Singh as Vazier
(September) Peshawara Singh put to death
(September) Execution of Jawahir Singh
(September) Anandpur Mukhowal Affair
(November) Lal Singh appointed as Vazier
(11 December) The Sikhs cross the Sutlej
(13 December) British Declaration of war
(18 December) The Battle of Mudki
(21-22 December) The Battle of Ferozeshah

1846 (21 January) The Skirmish of Baddowal
(28 January) The Battle of Aliwal
(10 February) The Battle of Sobraon
(February) The Preyma Plot
(9 March) The Treaty of Lahore
(11 March) *Supplementary articles to the Treaty of Lahore*
(16 March) Treaty with Gulab Singh
(September) The Kashmir revolt
(December) Banishment of Lal Singh
(December) Jindan pensioned off
(22 December) The Treaty of Bhyrowal

1847 (August) Jindan removed to Sheikhupura
(December) Mulraj resigns

1848 (20 April) Murder of Vans Agnew and W Anderson at Multan
(2 June) Dalhousie justifies his inaction
(19 June) Edwardes defeats Mulraj at Kineyree
(May) Jindan removed to Benares
(30 June) Mulraj defeated at Suddosain
(4 September) Siege of Multan
(August) The Hazara revolt
(12 September) Movement of British forces
(13 September) Desertion of Sher Singh
(16 November) Gough crosses the Ravi
(22 November) The Battle of Ramnagar

1849 (13 January) The Battle of Chilianwala
(22 January) Fall of Multan
(21 February) The Battle of Gujrat
(29 March) The Annexation of the Punjab
(April) Escape of Jindan

APPENDICES

APPENDIX No 1

THE TREATY WITH LAHORE OF 1806

Treaty of Friendship and Unity between the Honouroble East India Company and the Sardars Ranjit Singh and Fateh Singh.

Sardar Ranjit Siogh and Sardar Fateh Singh have coosented to the following articles of agreement, concluded hy Lieutenant-Colonel John Malcolm, under the special authority of the Right Honourable Lord Lake, himself duly authorized hy the Honourahle Sir George Hilaro Barlow, Bart , Governor-General, and Sardar Fateh Singh, as prineipal on the part of himself, and plenipotentiary on the part of Ranjit Singh —

Article 1 Sardar Ranjit Singh and Sardar Fateh Singh Ahluwalia herehy agree that they will cause Jaswant Kao Holkar to remove with his army to the distance of thirty coss from Amritsar immediately, and will never hereafter hold any further eonnection with him, or aid or assist him with troops, or in any other manner whatever, and they further agree that they will not in any way molest such of Jaswant Rao Holkar's followers or troops as nre desirous of returning to their homes in the Deccan, but, on the contrary, will render them every assistance in their power for carrying such intention into execution

Article 2 The British Governmcnt herehy agrees, that in case n pacification should not he effected between that Government and Jaswant Rao Holkar, the British army shall move from its present encampment, on the banks of the river Beas, as soon as Jaswant Rao Holkar, aforesaid shall have marched his army to the distaoce of thirty coss from Amritsar, and that, in any treaty which may hereafter he concluded hetween the British Government and Jaswant Rao Holkar, it shall he stipulated that, immediately after the conclusion of the said *treaty, Holkar shall evacuate the territories of the Sikhs, and march* towards his own, and that he shall in no way whatever injure or destory such parts of the Sikh country as may lie in his route The British Government further agrees that, as long as the said Chieftaios, Raojit Siogh aod Fateh Siogh, ahstain from holding any frieodly coooection with the eoemies of that Government, or from committing any act of hostility on their own parts against the said Government, the British armies shall never enter the territories of the said Chieftaios, nor will the British Goveroment form any plans for the seizure or sequestration of their possessioos or property.

Dated 1st January, 1806

APPENDIX No 2

SIR DAVID OCHTERLONEY'S PROCLAMATION OF 1809

Precept or "Ittillah Nameh," under the Seal of General St Leger, and under the Seal and Signature of Colonel Ochterloney , written the 9th of February, 1809, corresponding to the 23rd Zee Hijeh, 1223, Hijri

The British army having encamped near the frontiers of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, it has been thought proper to signify the pleasure of the British Government, by means of this precept, in order to make all the Chiefs of the Maharaja acquainted with the sentiments of the British Government, which have solely for their object and aim to confirm the friendship with the Maharaja, and to prevent any injury to his country, the preservation of friendship between the two States depending on particular conditions which are hereby detailed

The Thanas in the fortress of Kharar, Khanpur, and other places on this side of the river Sutlej, which have been placed in the hands of the dependants of the Maharaja, shall be razed, and the same places restored to their ancient possessors

The force of cavalry and infantry which may have crossed to this side of the Sutlej must be recalled to the other side, to the country of the Maharaja

The troops stationed at the Ghat of Phillaur must march thence, and depart to the other side of the river as described, and in future the the troops of the Maharaja shall never advance into the country of the Chiefs situated on this side of the river, who have called in for their security and protection Thanas of the British Government, but if in the manner that the British have placed Thanas of moderate number on this side of the Sutlej if in like manner a small force by way of Thana be stationed at the Ghat of Phillour, it will not be objected to.

If the Maharaja persevere in the fulfilment of the above stipulations which he so repeatedly professed to do in presence of Mr Metcalfe, such fulfilment will confirm the mutual friendship In case of non-compliance with these stipulations, then shall it be plain that the Maharaja has no regard for the friendship of the British, but, on the contrary, resolves on enmity In such case the victorious British army shall commence every mode of defence

The communication of this precept is solely with the view of publishing the sentiments of the British, and to know those of the Maharaja The British are confident that the Maharaja will consider the contents of this precept as abounding to his real advantage, and as affording a conspicuous proof of their friendship that with their capacity for war, they are also intent on peace

APPENDIX No 3

THE TREATY WITH LAHORE OF 1809

TREATY BETWEEN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE RAJA OF LAHORE

Dated 25 April, 1809

Whereas certain differences which had arisen between the British Government and the Raja of Lahore have been happily and amicably adjusted and both parties being anxious to maintain relations of perfect amity and concord, the following articles of treaty, which shall be binding on the heirs and successors of the two parties, have been concluded by the Raja Ranjit Singh in person, and by the agency of C T Metcalfe, Esquire, on the part of the British Government

Article I Perpetual friendship shall subsist between the British

Government and the State of Lahore, the latter sball be considered, witb respect to the former, to he on the footing of the most favoured powers, and tbe Britisb Government will have no concern with the territories and subjects of tbe Raja to the northward of tbe river Sutlej

Article 2. The Raja will never maintain in the territory which he occupies on tbe left bank of the river Sutlej more troops than are necessary for the internal duties of that territory, nor commit or suffer any encroacbments on the possessions or rights of the Chiefs in its vicinity

Article 3. In the event of a violation of any of the preceding articles, or of a departure from the rules of friendsh'p, this treaty shall be considered null and void

Article 4 This treaty consisting of four articles, having been settled and concluded at Amritsar, on the 25th day of April, 1809, Mr C T Metcalfe bas delivered to the Raja of Lahore a copy of the same in English and Persian, under his seal and signature, and the Raja bas delivered another copy of tbe same under bis seal and signature, and Mr C T. Metcalfe engages to procure within the space of two months a copy of the same, duly ratified by Rigbt Honourable the Governor-General in Council, on the receipt of wbich by the Raja, the present treaty sball be deemed complete nnd binding on both parties, and the copy of it now delivered to the Raja shall he returned

APPENDIX No 4

PROCLAMATION OF PROTECTION TO CIS-SUTLEJ STATES AGAINST LAHORE

Dated 3rd May, 1809

Translation of an "Ittilah Nameh," addressed to the Chiefs of the Country of Malwa and Sirhind, on this side of the River Sutlej

It is clearer than the sun, and better proved than the existence of yesterday, that the marching of a detachment of British troops to this side of the river Sutlej was entirely at the application and earnest entreaty of the several Chiefs, and originated solely from friendly considerations in the British Government, to preserve them in their possessions and independence A treaty having been concluded, on the 25th of April, 1809, between Mr Metcalfe on the part of the British Government, and Maharaja Ranjit Singh, agreeably to the orders of the Right Honourable tbe Governor-General in Council, I have the pleasure of publishing, for the satisfaction of the Chiefs of the country of Malwa and Sirhind, the pleasure and resolutions of the British Governmant, as contained in the seven following articles —

Article 1 The country of the Chiefs of Malwa and Sirhind having entered under the British protection, they shall in future he secured from the authority and influence of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, conformably to the terms of the treaty

Article 2 All the country of the Chiefs thus taken under protection shall he exempted from all pecuniary tribute to the British Government

Article 3 The Chiefs shall remain in the full exercise of the

same rights and authority in their own possessions which they enjoyed before they were received under the British protection

Article 4 Should a British force, on purposes of general welfare, be required to march through the country of the said Chiefs, it is necessary and incumbent that every Chief shall, within his own possessions, assist and furnish, to the full of his power, such force with supplies of grain and other necessaries which may be demanded

Article 5 Should an enemy approach from any quarter for the purpose of conquering this country, friendship and mutual interest required that the Chiefs join the British army with all their force, and, exerting themselves in expelling the enemy, act under discipline and proper obedience

Article 6 All European articles brought by merchants from the eastern district for the use the army shall be allowed to pass, by the Thanadars and Sardars of the several Chiefs, without molestation and the demand of duty

Article 7 All horses purchased for the use of cavalry regiments, whether in the district of Sirhind or elsewhere, the bringers of which being provided with sealed "Rahdaries' from the Resident at Delhi or officer commanding at Sirhind, shall be allowed to pass through the country of the said Chiefs without molestation or the demand of duty

APPENDIX No 5

PROCLAMATION OF PROTECTION OF CIS-SUTLEJ STATES AGAINST ONE ANOTHER

For the Information and Assurance of the Protected Chiefs of the Plains between the Sutlej and Jumna (22nd August, 1811)

On the 3rd May, 1809, an 'Ittila Nama' comprised of seven articles, was issued by the orders of the British Government, purporting that the country of the Sardars of Sirhind and Malwa having come under their protection, Raja Ranjit Singh, agreeably to treaty, had no concern with the possessions of the above Sardars , that British Government had no intention of claiming Peishkashs or Nazarana, and that they should continue in the full control and enjoyment of their respective possessions ' The publication of the above 'Ittila Nama' was intended to afford every confidence to the Sardars, that the protection of the country was the sole object, that they had no intention of control, and that those having possessions should remain in full and complete enjoyment thereof

Whereas several Zamindars and other subjects of the Chiefs of this country have preferred complaints to the officers of the British Government, who having in view the tenor of the above 'Ittila Nama' have not attended, and will not in future pay attention to them , for instance, on the 15th of June, 1817, Delawar Ali Khan of Samana complained to the Resident of Delhi against the officers of Raja Sahib Singh for jewels and other property said to have been seized by them, who, in reply, observed, that the "Cusba of Samana being in the Amildari of Raja Sahib Singh, his complaint should be made to him", and also, on the 12th of July, 1811, Dussowndha Singh and Gurmukh Singh com-

plained to Colonel Ochterlony, Agent to the Governer-General, against Sardar Charat Singh, for their shares of property, &c., and, in reply it was written on the back of their arzi, "that since, during the period of three years, no claim was preferred against Charat Singh by any of his brothers, nor even the name of any co partner mentioned, and since it was advertised in the "Ittila Nama" delivered to the Sardars, that every Chief should remain in the quiet and full enjoyment of his domains, the petition could not be attended to,'—the insertion of these answers to complaints is intended as examples, and also that it may be impressed on the minds of every Zamindar and other subject, that the attainment of justice is to be expected from their respective Chiefs only, that they may not, in the smallest degree swerve from the observation of subordination It is, therefore, highly incumbent upon the Rajas and other Sardars of this side of the river Sutlej, that they explain this to their respective subjects, and court their confidence, that it may be clear to them, that complaints to the officers of the British Government will be of no avail, and that they consider their respective Sardars as the source of justice, and that, of their free will and accord, they observe uniform obedience.

And whereas, according to the first proclamation, it is not the intention of the British Government to interfere in the possessions of the Sardars of this country, it is nevertheless, for the purpose of ameliorating the condition of the community, particularly necessary to give general information, that several Sardars have, since the last incursion of Raja Ranjit Singh, wrested the estates of others, and deprived them of their lawful possessions, and that in the restoration, they have used delays until detachments of the British army have been sent to effect restitution, as in the case of the Rani of Tirah, the Sikhs of Chulian, the Talukas of Karauli and Chehloundy, and the village of Chiha, and the reason of such delays and evasions can only be attributed to the temporary enjoyment of the revenues and subjecting the owners to irremediable losses,—It is, therefore, by order of the British Government, hereby proclaimed that if any one of the Sardars or others has forcibly taken possession of the estates of others, or otherwise injured *the lawful owners, it is necessary that before the occurrence of any* complaint, the proprietor should be satisfied and by no means to defer the restoration of the property,—in which, however, should delays be made, and the interference of the British authority become requisite, the revenues of the estate from the date of ejection of the lawful proprietor, together with whatever other losses the inhabitants of that place may sustain from the march of troops, shall without scruple be demanded from the offending party, and for disobedience of the present orders, a penalty, according to the circumstances of the case and of the offender, shall be levied, agreeably to the decision of the British Government.

APPENDIX No 6

INDUS NAVIGATION TREATY OF 1832

Articles of a Convention established between the Honourable the East India Company, and His Highness the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the

Ruler of the Punjab, for the opening of the Navigation of the Rivers Indus and Sutlej

By the grace of God, the relations of firm alliance and indissoluble ties of friendship existing between the Honourable the East India Company and His Highness the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, founded on the auspicious treaty formerly concluded by Sir C T Metcalfe, Bart, and since confirmed in the written pledge of sincere amity presented by the Right Honourable Lord W C Bentinck, G C B and G C H, Governor-General of British India, at the meeting at Rupar, are, like the sun, clear and manifest to the whole world, and will continue unimpaired, and increasing in strength from generation to generation —By virtue of these firmly established bonds of friendship, since the opening of the navigation of the rivers Indus proper (*i e* Indus below the confluence of the Panjnad) and Sutlej, (a measure deemed expedient by both States, with a view to promote the general interests of commerce) —has lately been effected through the agency of Captain C M Wade, Political Agent at Ludhiana, deputed by the Right Honourable the Governor General for that purpose The following articles, explanatory of the conditions by which the said navigation is to be regulated, as concerns the nomination of officers, the mode of collecting the duties, and the protection of the trade by that route, have been framed, in order that the officers of the two States employed in their execution may act accordingly

that such persons will hereafter also conform to the same rule, and not cross without the usual passports

Article 5 A tariff shall be established exhibiting the rate of duties leviable on each description of merchandize, which, after having been approved by both Governments, is to be the standard by which the superintendents and collectors of customs are to be guided.

Article 6 Merchants are invited to adopt the new route with perfect confidence no one shall be suffered to molest them or unnecessarily impede their progress, care being taken that they are only detained for the collection of the duties, in manner stipulated, at the established stations

Article 7. The officers who are to be entrusted with the collection of the duties and examination of the goods on the right bank of the river shall be stationed at Mithankot and Harike, at no other places but these two shall boats in transit on the river be liable to examination or stoppage When the persons in charge of boats stop of their own accord to take in or give out cargo, the goods will be liable to the local transit duty of the Maharaja's Government, previously to their being loaded, as provided in article 2 The superintendent stationed at Mithankot having examined the cargo, will levy the established duty, and grant a passport, with a written account of the cargo and freight. On the arrival of the boat at Harike, the superintendent of that station will compare the passport with the cargo, and whatever goods are found in excess will be liable to the payment of the established duty, while the rest, having already paid duty at Mithankot, will pass on free The same rule shall be observed in respect to merchandize conveyed from Harike by the way of the rivers towards Sind, that whatever may be fixed as the share of duties on the right bank of the river Sutlej, in right of the Maharaja's own dominions and of those in allegiance to him, the Maharaja's officers will collect it at the places appointed With regard to the security and safety of merchants who may adopt this route, the Maharaja's officers shall afford them every protection in their power; and merchants, on halting for the night on either bank of the Sutlej, are required, with reference to the treaty of friendship which exists between the two States, to give notice, and to show their passport to the Thanadar, or officers in authority at the place, and request protection for themselves if, notwithstanding this precaution, loss should at any time occur, a strict inquiry will be made, and reclamation sought from those who are blameable The articles of the present treaty for opening the navigation of the rivers above mentioned, having, agreeably to subsisting relations, been approved by the Right Honourable the Governor-General, shall be carried into execution accordingly

Dated at Lahore the 26th of December, 1832.

APPENDIX No 7

SUPPLEMENTARY INDUS NAVIGATION TREATY OF 1834

Draft of a Supplementary Treaty between the British Government and Maharaja Ranjit Singh for establishing a Toll on the Indus (29th November, 1834.)

In conformity with the subsisting relations of friendship, as established and confirmed by former treaties, between the Honourable

Ruler of the Punjab, for the opening of the Navigation of the Rivers Indus and Sutlej

By the grace of God, the relations of firm alliance and indissoluble ties of friendship existing between the Honourable the East India Company and His Highness the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, founded on the auspicious treaty formerly concluded by Sir C T Metcalfe, Bart, and since confirmed in the written pledge of sincere amity presented by the Right Honourable Lord W C Bentinck, G C B and G C H, Governor-General of British India, at the meeting at Rupar, are, like the sun, clear and manifest to the whole world, and will continue unimpaired, and increasing in strength from generation to generation —By virtue of these firmly established bonds of friendship, since the opening of the navigation of the rivers Indus proper (*i e* Indus below the confluence of the Panjnad) and Sutlej, (a measure deemed expedient by both States, with a view to promote the general interests of commerce),—has lately been effected through the agency of Captain C M Wade, Political Agent at Ludhiana, deputed by the Right Honourable the Governor-General for that purpose The following articles, explanatory of the conditions by which the said navigation is to be regulated, as concerns the nomination of officers, the mode of collecting the duties, and the protection of the trade by that route, have been framed, in order that the officers of the two States employed in their execution may act accordingly

Article 1 The provisions of the existing treaty relative to the right bank of the river Sutlej and all its stipulations, together with the contents of the friendly pledge already mentioned, shall remain binding, and a strict regard to preserve the relations of friendship between the two States shall be the ruling principle of action In accordance with that treaty, the Honourable Company has not, nor will have any concern with the right bank of the river Sutlej

Article 2 The tariff which is to be established for the line of navigation in question is intended to apply exclusively to the passage of merchandize by that route, and not to interfere with the transit duties levied on goods proceeding from one bank of the river to the other, nor with the places fixed for their collection they are to remain as heretofore

Article 3 Merchants frequenting the same route, while within the limits of the Maharaja's Government, are required to show a due regard to his authority, as is done by merchants generally, and not to commit any acts offensive to the civil and religious institutions of the Sikhs.

Article 4 Any one purposing to go the said route will intimate his intention to the agent of either State and apply for a passport, agreeably to a form to be laid down, having obtained which, he may proceed on his journey. The merchants coming from Amritsar, and other parts on the right bank of the river Sutlej, are to intimate their intentions to the agent of the Maharaja, at Harike, or other appointed places, and obtain a passport through him, and merchants coming from Hindustan, or other parts on the left bank of the river Sutlej, will intimate their intentions to the Honourable Company's agent and obtain a passport through him As foreigners, and Hindustanis, and Sardars of the protected Sikh States and elsewhere, are not in the habit of crossing the Sutlej without a passport from the Maharaja's officers, it is expected

that such persons will hereafter also conform in the same rule, and not cross without the usual passports

Article 5 A tariff shall be established exhibiting the rate of duties leviable on each description of merchandize, which, after having been approved by both Governments, is to be the standard by which the superintendents and collectors of customs are to be guided

Article 6 Merchants are invited to adopt the new route with perfect confidence no one shall be suffered to molest them or unnecessarily impede their progress, care being taken that they are only detained for the collection of the duties, in manner stipulated, at the established stations

Article 7 The officers who are to be entrusted with the collection of the duties and examination of the goods on the right bank of the river shall be stationed at Mithankot and Harike, at no other places but these two shall boats in transit on the river be liable to examination or stoppage When the persons in charge of boats stop of their own accord to take in or give out cargo, the goods will be liable to the local transit duty of the Maharaja's Government, previously to their being landed, as provided in article 2. The superintendent stationed at Mithankot having examined the cargo, will levy the established duty, and grant a passport, with a written account of the cargo and freight On the arrival of the boat at Harike, the superintendent of that station will compare the passport with the cargo, and whatever goods are found in excess will be liable to the payment of the established duty, while the rest, having already paid duty at Mithankot, will pass on free The same rule shall be observed in respect to merchandize conveyed from Harike by the way of the rivers towards Sind, that whatever may be fixed as the share of duties on the right bank of the river Sutlej, in right of the Maharaja's own dominions and of those in allegiance to him, the Maharaja's officers will collect it at the places appointed With regard to the security and safety of merchants who may adopt this route, the Maharaja's officers shall afford them every protection in their power; and merchants, on halting for the night on either bank of the Sutlej, are required, with reference to the treaty of friendship which exists between the two States, to give notice, and to show their passport to the Thanadar, or officers in authority at the place, and request protection for themselves if, notwithstanding this precaution, loss should at any time occur, a strict inquiry will be made, and reclamation sought from those who are blameable The articles of the present treaty for opening the navigation of the rivers above mentioned, having, agreeably to subsisting relations, been approved by the Right Honourable the Governor-General, shall be carried into execution accordingly

Dated at Lahore the 26th of December, 1832

APPENDIX No 7

SUPPLEMENTARY INDUS NAVIGATION TREATY OF 1834

Draft of a Supplementary Treaty between the British Government and Maharaja Ranjit Singh for establishing a Toll on the Indus (29th November, 1834)

In conformity with the subsisting relations of friendship, as established and confirmed by former treaties, between the Honourable

the East India Company and his Highness Maharaja Ranjit Singb, and whereas in the 5th article of the treaty concluded at Lahore on the 26th day of Decemher, 1832, it was stipulated that a moderate scale of duties should be fixed hy the two Governments in concert, to he levied on all merchandize on transit up and down the rivers Indus and Sutlej, the said Governments being now of opinion that, owing to the inexperience of the people of these countries in such matters, the mode of levying duties then proposed (*viz*, on tbe value and quantity of goods) could not fail to give rise to mutual misunderstandings and reclamations, have, with a view to *prevent these results*, determined to substitute a toll, which shall be levied on all boats, with whatever merchandize laden The following articles have therefore been adopted as supplementary to the former treaty, and, in conformity with them, each Government engages tbat the toll shall be levied, and its amount neither be increased nor diminished except hy mutual consent

Article 1 A toll of Rs 570 sball be levied on all hoats laden with *merchandize in transit* on the rivers Indus and Sutlej between the sea and Rupar, without reference to their size, or to the weight or value of tbeir cargo, the ahove tolls to be divided among the different States in proportion to the extent of territory whicb they possess on the hanks of these rivers

Article 2 The portion of the ahove toll appertaining to the Lahore Chief in right of his territory on botb banks of these rivers, as determined in tbe subjoined scale, sball be levied opposite to Mithan kot on hoats coming from tbe sea towards rupar, and in tbe vicinity of Hari-ki Pattan on boats going from Rupar towards the sea, and at no other place

In right of territory on the rigbt bank of the rivers Indus and Sutlej, Rs 155 4 ans	In right of territory on tbe left bank of tbe rivers Indus and Sutlej, the Maharaja's share, of Rs 67 15 ans 9 pie

Article 3 In order to facilitate tbe realization of the toll due to the different States, as well as for the speedy and satisfactory adjustment of disputes which may arise connected with the safety of the navigation and the welfare of the trade by tbe new route, a British officer will reside opposite to *Mithankot*, and a native agent on the part of the *British* Government opposite to Hari-ki-Pattan These officers will he subject to the orders of the British Agent at Ludhiana, and the agents who may be appointed to reside at those places on the part of the other States concerned in the navigation, *viz*, Bahawalpur and Sind, together with those of Lahore, will co-operate with them in the execution of their duties

Article 4 In order to guard against imposition on the part of merchants in making false complaints of being plundered of property which formed no part of their cargoes, they are required, when taking out their passports, to produce an invoice of their cargo, which heing duly authenticated, a copy of it will be annexed to their passports, and wherever their boats may be brought to for the night, they are required to give immediate notice to the Thanadars or officers of the place, and request protection for themselves, at the same time showing the passports they may bave received at Mithankot or Hariki, as the case may he

Article 5 Such parts of the 5th, 6th, 9th, and 10th articles of the treaty of the 26th of December, 1832, as have reference to the fixing a duty on the value and quantity of merchandize, and to the mode of its collection, are hereby rescinded, and the forgoing articles substituted in their place, agreeably to which and the conditions of the preamble, the toll will be levied.

N. B. A distribution of the shares due to the British protected States and the feudatories of the Maharaja on the left bank of the Sutlej will be determined hereafter

APPENDIX No 8

THE TRIPARTITE TREATY WITH RANJIT SINGH AND SHAH SHUJA OF 1838

Treaty of Alliance and friendship between Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja ul-Mulk, with the approbation of, and in concert with the British Government. (Done at Lahore, 26th June, 1838, signed at Simla, 25th June, 1839)

Whereas a treaty was formerly concluded between Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, consisting of fourteen Articles, exclusive of the preamble and the conclusion And whereas the execution of the provisions of the said treaty was suspended for certain reasons And whereas at this time, Mr W. H Macnaghten having been deputed by the Right Honourable George Lord Auckland, G C B, Governor General of India to the presence of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and vested with full powers to form a treaty, in a manner consistent with the friendly engagements subsisting between the two States, the treaty aforesaid is revived, and concluded with certain modifications, and four new articles have been added thereto, with the approbation of, and in concert with the British Government, the provisions whereof, ascertained in the following eighteen Articles, will be duly and faithfully observed

Article 1. Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, disclaims all title on the part of himself, his heirs and successors, and all the Saddozais, to all the territories lying on either bank of the river Indus, that may be possessed by the Maharaja, *viz*, Kashmir, including its limits, E, W, N, S, together with the fort of Attock, Chack-Hazara, Khahal, Amb, with its dependencies, on the left bank of the aforesaid river, and on the right bank Peshawar, with the Yusufzai territory, and the Khataks, Hashtnagar, Michni, Kohat, Hanggu, and all places dependent on Peshawar, as far as the Khyber Pass, Bannu, the Waziri's territory Daur-Tank, Garang, Kalabagh and Khushalgarh, with their dependent districts, Dera Ismail Khan, and its dependency, Kot Mithan, Umar Kot, and their dependent territory, Sanghar, Harrand-Dajal, Hajipur, Rajanpur, and three Kutches, as well as Mankehra, with its district, and the province of Multan, situated on the left bank. These countries, and places are considered to be the property, and to form the estate, of the Maharaja, the Shah neither has nor will have any concern with them, they belong to the Maharaja and his posterity from generation to generation

Article 2 The people of the country on the other side of Khyber will not be suffered to commit robberies, or aggressions, or any disturbances on this side If any defaulter of either State, who has

embezzled the revenue, take refuge in the territory of the other, each party engages to surrender him, and no person shall obstruct the passage of the stream which issues out of the Khyber defile, and supplies the fort of Fatehgarh with water according to ancient usage

Article 3 As agreeably to the treaty established between the British Government and the Maharaja, no one can cross from the left to the right bank of the Sutlej without a passport from the Maharaja, the same rule shall be observed regarding the passage of the Indus, whose waters join the Sutlej, and no one shall be allowed to cross the Indus without the Maharaja's permission

Article 4 Regarding Shikarpur and the territory of Sind on the right bank of the Indus, the Shah will agree to abide by whatever may be settled as right and proper, in conformity with the happy relations of friendship subsisting between the British Government and the Maharaja through Captain Wade

Article 5 When the Shah shall have established his authority in Kabul and Kandahar he will annually send the Maharaja the following articles *viz*, —55 high bred horses of approved colour, and pleasant paces, 11 Persian scimetars, 7 Persian poniards 25 good mules, fruits of various kinds both dry and fresh, and Sardas or Musk melons, of a sweet and delicate flavour (to be sent throughout the year by the way of the Kabul river to Peshawar), grapes, pomegranates, apples, quinces, almonds, raisins, pistahs or chestnuts, an abundant supply of each, as well as pieces of satin of every colour, chogas of fur, kim khabs wrought with gold and silver, and Persian carpets, altogether to the number of 101 pieces, —all these articles the Shah will continue to send every year to the Maharaja

Article 6 Each party shall address the other on terms of equality

Article 7 Merchants of Afghanistan who may be desirous of trading to Lahore, Amritsar, or any other parts of the Maharaja's possessions, shall not be stopped or molested on their way, on the contrary, strict orders shall be issued to facilitate their intercourse, and the Maharaja engages to observe the same line of conduct on his part, in respect to traders who may wish to proceed to Afghanistan

Article 8 The Maharaja will yearly send to the Shah the following articles in the way of friendship —55 pieces of shawls 25 pieces of muslin 11 dooputtahs, 5 pieces of kimkhab, 5 scarfs 5 turbans, 55 loads of Bareh rice (peculiar to Peshawar)

Article 9 Any of the Maharaja's officers, who may be deputed to Afghanistan to purchase horses or on any other business, as well as those who may be sent by the Shah into the Punjab for the purpose of purchasing piece goods, or shawls, &c, to the amount of 11 000 rupees, will be treated by both sides with due attention, and every facility will be afforded to them in the execution of their commission

Article 10 Whenever the armies of the two States may happen to be assembled at the same place, on no account shall the slaughter of kine be permitted to take place

Article 11 In the event of the Shah taking an auxiliary force from the Maharaja, whatever booty may be acquired from the Barakzais in jewels, horses, arms, great and small, shall be equally divided between

the two contracting parties. If the Shah should succeed in obtaining possession of their property, without the assistance of the Maharaja's troops, the Shah agrees to send a portion of it by his own agent to the Maharaja in the way of friendship

Article 12 An exchange of missions charged with letters and presents shall constantly take place between the two parties

Article 13 Should the Maharaja require the aid of any of the Shah's troops in furtherance of the objects contemplated by this treaty, the Shah engages to send a force commanded by one of his principal officers, in like manner the Maharaja will furnish the Shah, when required, with an auxiliary force, composed of Muhammadans, and commanded by one of the principal officers, as far as Kabul, in furtherance of the objects contemplated by this treaty. When the Maharaja may go to Peshawar, the Shah will depute a Shahzada to visit him, on which occasions the Maharaja will receive and dismiss him with the honour and consideration due to his rank and dignity

Article 14. The friends and enemies of each of the three high powers, that is to say, the British and Sikh Governments and Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, shall be the friends and enemies of all

Article 15. Shah Shuja ul-Mulk engages, after the attainment of of his object, to pay without fail to the Maharaja the sum of two lakhs of rupees, of the Nanakshahi or Kaldar currency, calculating from the date on the which the Sikh troops may be dispatched for the purpose of reinstating His Majesty in Kabul, in consideration of the Maharaja stationing a force of not less than 5000 men, cavalry and infantry, of the Muhammadan persuasion, within the limits of the Peshawar territory, for the support of the Shah, and to be sent to the aid of His Majesty, whenever the British Government, in concert and counsel with the Maharaja, shall deem their aid necessary, and when any matter of great importance may arise to the westward, such measures will be adopted with regard to it as may seem expedient and proper at the time to the British and Sikh Governments In the event of the Maharaja's requiring the aid of any of the Shah's troops, a deduction shall be made from the subsidy proportioned to the period for which such aid may be afforded, and the British Government holds itself responsible for the punctual payment af the above sum annually to the Maharaja, so long as the provisions of this treaty are duly observed

Article 16. Shah Shuja-ul Mulk agrees to relinquish for himself, his heirs, and successers, all claims of supremacy and arrears of tribute over the country now held by the Amirs of Sind, (which will continue to belong to the Amirs and their successors in perpetuity), on condition of the payment to him by the Amirs of such a sum as may be determined under the mediation of the British Government, 1,500,000 of rupees of such payment being made over by him to Maharaja Ranjit Singh On these payments being completed, article 4th of the treaty of the 12th March, 1833, will be considered cancelled, and the customary interchange of letters and suitable presents between the Maharaja and the Amirs of Sind shall be maintained as heretofore

Article 17. When Shah Shuja ul Mulk shall have succeeded in establishing his authority in Afghanistan, he shall not attack or molest

his nephew, the ruler of Herat, in the possession of the territories now subject to his Government

Article 18 Shah Shuja ul-Mulk binds himself, his heirs, and successors, to refrain from entering into negotiations with any foreign State without the knowledge and consent of the British and Sikh Governments and to oppose any power having the design to invade the British and Sikh territories by force of arms to the utmost of his ability

The three powers parties to this treaty namely, the British Government, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja ul Mulk, cordially agree to the foregoing articles There shall be no deviations from them, and in that case the present treaty shall be considered binding for ever, and this treaty shall come into operation from and after the date on which the seals and signatures of the three contracting parties shall have been affixed thereto

Done at Lahore, this 26th day *of June*, *in* the year of our Lord 1838 corresponding with the 15th of the month of Assarh 1895, era of Bikramajit

Ratified by the Right Honourable the Goveral General at Simla, on the 23rd day of July, A D 1838

Auckland
Ranjit Singh
Shuja ul mulk

APPENDIX No 9

INDUS AND SUTLEJ TOLL AGREEMENT OF 1839

Agreement entered into with the Government of Lahore, regarding the Duties to be levied on the Transit of Merchandize by the Rivers Sutlej and Indus in modification of the Supplementary Articles of the Treaty of 1832 (Dated 19th May, 1839)

Objections having been urged against the levy of the same duty on a boat of small as on one of a large size and the merchants having solicited that the duties might be levied on the maundage, or measurement, of the boats, or on the value of the goods, it is therefore, agreed, that hereafter the whole duty shall be paid at one place and either at Ludhiana or Ferozepur, or at Mithankot, and that the duty be levied on the merchandize, and not on the boats, as follows

Pushmeena	per	maund	10 rupees
Opium	,,	,,	7½ rupees
Indigo	,,	,,	2½ rupees
Dried fruits	,,	,,	1 rupee
Superior silks, muslins, broad, &c			6 annas
Inferior silks, cottons, chintzes			4 annas

On Exports from the Punjab

Sugar, ghee, oil, drugs, ginger, saffron, and cotton	per	maund	4 annas
Madder	,,	,,	8 annas
Grain	,,	,,	2 annas

On Imports from Bombay

All imports whatever	per maund 4 annas

APPENDIX No. 10

INDUS AND SUTLEJ TOLL AGREEMENT OF 1840

Treaty between the Lahore and British Governments, regarding the levy of Transit Duties on Boats navigating the Sutlej and Indus (Dated 27th June, 1840.)

Formerly a treaty was executed by the Right Honourable Lord W. Cavendish Bentinck, the Governor-General of India, on the 14th of Poos, Samhat 1889 (corresponding with A D. 1832), through Colonel, then Captain Wade, concerning the navigation of the Sutlej and the Sind rivers in the Khalsa territory, in concurrence with the wishes of both the friendly allied Governments. Another treaty on the subject was subsequently executed, through the same officer, in Samhat 1891 (corresponding with A D. 1834), fixing a duty on every mercantile boat, independent of the quantity of its freight and the nature of its merchandize. A third treaty was executed on this subject, in accordance with the wishes of both Governments, on the arrival of Mr Clerk, Agent to the Governor-General at the Durbar, in May, 1839, adjusting the rate of duties on merchandize according to quantity and kind, and it was also specified, that no further reduction of these rates should be proposed between the two Governments On the visit of that gentleman to the Khalsa Darbar at Amritsar, in Jith Samhat, 1897 (corresponding with May, 1840), the difficulties and inconvenience which seemed to result to trade under the system proposed last year, in consequence of the obstruction to boats for the purpose of search, and the ignorance of traders, and the difficulty of adjusting duties according to the different kinds of articles freighted in these boats, were all stated, and that gentleman proposed to revise that system, by fixing a scale of duties proportionate to the measurement of bonts, and not on the kind of commodities, if this arrangement should be approved of by both Governments. Having reported to his Government the circumstance of the case, he now drew up a schedule of the rate of duties on the mercantile boats navigating the rivers Sind and Sutlej, and forwarded it for the consideration of this friendly Durbar; the Khalsa Government, therefore, with a due regard to the established alliance, having added a few sentences in accordance with the late treaties, and agreeably to what is already well understood, has signed and sealed the schedule; and it shall never be liable to any contradiction, difference, change, or alteration, without the concurrence and consent of both Governments, in consideration of mutual advantages, upon condition it does not interfere with the established custom duties at Amritsar, Lahore, and other inland places, or the other rivers in the Khalsa territory.

Article 1 Grain, wood, limestone, will be free from duty.

Article 2. With exception of the above, every commodity to pay duty according to the measurement of the boat.

Article 3. Duty on a boat not exceeding 50 maunds of freight proceeding from the foot of the Hills, Rupar, or Ludhiana to Mithankot or Rojhan, or from Rojhan or Mithankot to the foot of the Hills, Rupar, or Ludhiana, will be 50 rupees; viz.,

From the foot of the Hills to Ferozepur, or back	20 Rupees
From Ferozepur to Bahawalpur, or back	15 ,,
From Bahawalpur to Mithaokot or Rojban, or back	15 ,,

The whole trip, up or down 50 Rupees

Duty on a boat above 250 maunds, but not exceeding 500 maunds from the foot of the Hills, Rupar, or Ludhiana to Mithankot or Rojhan, or from Rojhan or Mithankot to the foot of the Hills, Rupar, or Ludhiana, will be 100 rupees, viz,

From the foot of the Hills to Ferozepur, or back	40 Rupees
From Bahawalpur to Mithankot or Rojhao or back	30 ,,
From Ferozepur to Bhawalpur, or back	30 ,,

The whole trip, up or down 100 Rupees

Duty on all boats above 500 maunds will be 150 rupees, viz,

From the foot of the Hills to Ferozepur, or back	60 Rupees
From Ferozepur to Bahawalpur or back	45 ,,
From Bahawalpur to Mithankot or Rojhan or back	45 ,,

The whole trip up or down 150 Rupees

Article 4 Boats to be classed 1,2, or 3, and the same to be written on the boat, and every boat to be registered

Article 5 These duties on merchandise frequenting the Sutlej and Sind are not to interfere with the duties on the banks of other rivers, or with the established inland custom houses throughout the Khalsa territory, which will remain on their usual footing

Dated 13th Asar, Sambat 1897, corresponding with 27th June 1840

APPENDIX No 11

DECLARATION OF WAR OF 1845

PROCLAMATION BY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA

Camp Lashkari Khan Ke Serai,
December 13th, 1845

The British Government has ever been on terms of friendship with that of the Punjab

In the year 1809, a treaty of amity and concord was conc between the British Government and the late Maharaja Ranjit the conditions of which have always been faithfully observed British Government, and were scrupulously fulfilled by Maharaja

The same friendly relations have been maintained cessors of Maharaja Ranjit Singh by the British G the present time

Since the death of the late Maharaja Sher Singh, the

state of the Lahore Government has made it incumhent on the Governor-General in Council tn adopt precautionary measures for the protection of the British frnntier : the nature of these measures, and the cause of their adoption, were at the time, fully explained to the Lahore Durhar.

Notwithstanding the disorganized state of the Lahore Government during the last two years, and many most unfriendly proceedings on the part of the Durhar, the Governor-General in Council has continued to evince his desire to maintain the relations of amity and concord which had so long existed hetween the two States, for the mutual interests and happiness of both. He has shown, on every occasion, the utmost forhearance, and consideration to the helpless state of the infant Maharaja Dalip Singh, whom the British Government had recognized as the successor to the late Maharaja Sher Singh.

The Governor-General in Council sincerely desired to see a strong Sikh Government re-estahlished in the Punjah, ahle to control its army, and to protect its suhjects ; he had not, up to the present moment, ahandoned the hope of seeing that important ohject effected hy the patriotic efforts of the Chiefs and people of that country.

The Sikh army recently marched from Lahore towards the British frontier, as it was alleged, hy the orders of the Durhar, for the purpose of invading the British territory.

The Governor-General's Agent, hy direction of the Governor-General, demanded an explanation of this movement, and no reply heing returned within a reasonahle time, the demand was repeated. The Governor-General unwilling to helieve in the hostile intentions of the Sikh Government to which no provocation had heen given, refrained from taking any measures which might have a tendeney to emharrass the Government of the Maharaja, or to induce collision hetween the two States.

When no reply was given to the repeated demand for explanation, while active military preparations were continued at Lahore, the Governor-General considered it necessary to order the advance of troops towards the frontier, tn reinforce the frontier posts.

The Sikh army has now, without a shadow of provocation, invaded the British territories.

The Governor-General must therefore take measures for effectually protecting the British provinces, fnr vindicating the authority of the British Government, and for punishing the violators of treaties and the disturhers of the puhlic peace.

The Governor-General herehy declares the possessions of Maharaja Dalip Singh, on the left or British hank nf the Sutlej, confiscated and annexed tn the British territories.

The Governor-General will respect the existing rights of all Jaigirdars, Zamindars, and tenants in the said possessinns, whn, hy the course they now pursue, evince their fidelity tn the British Government.

The Governor-General herehy calls upon all the Chiefs and Sardars in the prntected territories tn cn-operate cnrdially with the British Government for the punishment nf the commnn enemy, and

From the foot of the Hills to Ferozepur, or back	20 Rupees
From Ferozepur to Bahawalpur, or back	15 ,,
From Bahawalpur to Mithankot or Rojhan, or back	15 ,,

The whole trip, up or down 50 Rupees

Duty on a boat above 250 maunds, but not exceeding 500 maunds from the foot of the Hills, Rupar, or Ludhiana to Mithankot or Rojhan, or from Rojhan or Mithankot to the foot of the Hills, Rupar, or Ludhiana, will be 100 rupees, *viz*,

From the foot of the Hills to Ferozepur, or back	40 Rupees
From Bahawalpur to Mithankot or Rojhan or back	30 ,,
From Ferozepur to Bbawalpur, or back	30 ,,

The whole trip, up or down 100 Rupees

Duty on all boats above 500 maunds will be 150 rupees, *viz*,

From the foot of the Hills to Ferozepur, or back	60 Rupees
From Ferozepur to Bahawalpur or back	45 ,,
From Bahawalpur to Mitbankot or Rojhan or back	45 ,,

The whole trip up or down 150 Rupees

Article 4 Boats to be classed 1,2, or 3, and the same to be written on the boat, and every boat to be registered

Article 5 These duties on merchandise frequenting the Sutlej and Sind are not to interfere with the duties on the banks of other rivers, or with the established inland custom houses throughout the Khalsa territory, which will remain on their usual footing

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APPENDIX No 11

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December 13th, 1845

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In the year 1809, a treaty of amity and concord was concluded between the British Government and the late Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the conditions of which have always been faithfully observed by the British Government, and were scrupulously fulfilled by the late Maharaja

The same friendly relations have been maintained with the successors of Maharaja Ranjit Singh by the British Government up to the present time

Since the death of the late Maharaja Sher Singh, the disorganized

state of the Lahore Goverooment has made it incumheot on the Governor-General in Council to adopt precautionary measures for the protection of the British frontier : the nature of these measures, and the cause of their adoption, were at the time, fully explaioed to the Lahore Durhar.

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The Governor-General in Council sincerely desired to see a strong Sikh Governmeot re-established io the Punjah, ahle to control its army, and to protect its suhjeets ; he had not, up to the present momeot, ahandooed the hope of seeing that importaot ohject effected hy the patriotie efforts of the Chiefs and people of that couotry.

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The Governor-General must therefore take measures for effectually protecting the British provinces, for vindicating the authority of the British Government, and for punishing the violators of treaties and the disturhers of the puhlic peace.

The Governor-General herehy declares the possessions of Maharaja Dalip Singh, on the left or British hank of the Sutlej, confiscated and aonexed to the British territories.

The Governor-General will respect the existing rights of all Jaigirdars, Zamindars, and tenants in the said possessions, who, hy the course they now pursue, evince their fidelity to the British Government.

The Governor-General herehy calls upon all the Chiefs and Sardars in the protected territories to co-operate cordially with the British Government for the punishmeot of the common enemy, and

for the maintenance of order in these States Those of the Chiefs who show alacrity and fidelity in the discharge of this duty, which they owe to the protecting power, will find their interests promoted hereby, and those who take a contrary course will be treated as enemies to the British Government, and will be punished accordingly

The inhabitants of all the territories on the left bank of the Sutlej are hereby directed to abide peaceably in their respective villages, where they will receive efficient protection by the British Government All parties of men found in armed bands, who can give no satisfactory account of their proceedings, will be treated as disturbers of the public peace

All subjects of the British Government, and those who possess estates on both sides of the river Sutlej who, by their faithful adherence to the British Government, may be liable to sustain loss, shall be indemnified and secured in all their just rights and privileges

On the other hand, all subjects of the British Government who shall continue in the service of the Lahore State, and who disobey the proclamation by not immediately returning to their allegiance, will be liable to have their property on this side of the Sutlej confiscated, and themselves declared to be aliens and enemies of the British Government

APPENDIX No 12

FIRST TREATY WITH LAHORE OF 1846

Treaty between the British Government and the State of Lahore, concluded at Lahore, on March 9th, 1846

Whereas the treaty of amity and concord, which was concluded between the British Government and the late Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the ruler of Lahore, in 1809, was broken by the unprovoked aggression on the British provinces of the Sikh army, in December last : And whereas, on that occasion, by the proclamation dated the 13th of December, the territories then in the occupation of the Maharaja of Lahore, on the left or British bank of the river Sutlej, were confiscated and annexed to the British provinces, and, since that time, hostile operations have been prosecuted by the two Governments, the one against the other, which have resulted in the occupation of Lahore by the British troops And whereas it has been determined that, upon certain conditions, peace shall be re established between the two Governments, the following treaty of peace between the Honourable English East India Company, and Maharaja Dalip Singh Bahadur, and his children, heirs, and successors, has been concluded, on the part of the Honourable Company, by Frederick Currie, Esq, and Brevet Major Henry Montgomery Lawrence, by virtue of full powers to that effect vested in them by the Right Honourable Sir Henry Hardinge, G C B, one of Her Britannic Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, Governor General, appointed by the Honourable Company to direct and control all their affairs in the East Indies, and, on the part of his Highness the Maharaja Dalip Singh, by Bhai Ram Singh, Raja Lal Singh, Sardar Tej Singh, Sardar Chattar Singh Attariwala, Sardar Ranjor Singh Majithia, Dewan Dina Nath,

and Fakir Nuruddin, vested with full powers and authority on the part of his Highness

Article 1 There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between the British Government, on the one part, and Maharaja Dalip Singh, his heirs and successors, on the other

Article 2 The Maharaja of Lahore renounces for himself, his heirs and successors, all claim to, or connection with the territories lying to the south of the river Sutlej and engages never to have any concern with those territories, or the inhabitants thereof

Article 3 The Maharaja cedes to the Honourable Company, in perpetual sovereignty, all his forts, territories, and rights, in the Doab, or country, hill and plain, situate between the rivers Beas and Sutlej

Article 4 The British Government having demanded from the Lahore State, as indemnification for the expenses of the war, in addition to the cession of territory described in article 3, payment of one and a half crores of rupees, and the Lahore Government being unable to pay the whole of this sum at this time, or to give security satisfactory to the British Government for its eventual payment, the Maharaja cedes to the Honourable Company, in perpetual sovereignty, as equivalent for one crore of rupees, all his forts, territories, rights, and interests, in the hill countries which are situate between the rivers Beas and Indus, including the provinces of Kashmir and Hazara

Article 5 The Maharaja will pay to the British Government the sum of fifty lacs of rupees, on or before the ratification of this treaty

Article 6 The Maharaja engages to disband the mutinous troops of the Lahore army, taking from them their arms, and his Highness agrees to reorganise the regular, or Ain, regiments of infantry, upon the system, and according to the regulations as to pay and allowances, observed in the time of the late Maharaja Ranjit Singh The Maharaja further engages to pay up all arrears to the soldiers that are discharged under the provisions of this article

Article 7 The regular army of the Lahore State shall henceforth be limited to 25 battalions of infantry, consisting of 800 bayonets each, with 12,000 cavalry this number at no time to be exceeded without the concurrence of the British Government Should it be necessary at any time, for any special cause, that this force should be increased, the cause shall be fully explained to the British Government, and, when the special necessity shall have passed, the regular troops shall be again reduced to the standard specified in the former clause of this article

Article 8 The Maharaja will surrender to the British Government all the guns, thirty six in number, which have been pointed against the British troops, and which, having been placed on the right bank of the river Sutlej, were not captured at the battle of Sobraon

Article 9 The control of the rivers Beas and Sutlej with the continuations of the latter river, commonly called the Ghara and Panjnad, to the confluence of the Indus at Mithankot, and the control of the Indus from Mithankot to the borders of Baluchistan, shall, in respect to tolls and ferries, rest with the British Government The provisions of this article shall not interfere with the passage of boats belonging to the Lahore Government on the said rivers, for the purposes of traffic, or the conveyance of passengers up and down

their course Regarding the ferries between the two countries respectively, at the several ghats of the said rivers, it is agreed that the British Government, after defraying all the expenses of management and establishments, shall account to the Lahore Government for one half of the net profits of the ferry collections The provisions of this article have no reference to the ferries on that part of the river Sutlej which forms the boundary of Bahawalpur and Lahore respectively

Article 10 If the British Government should, at any time, desire to pass troops through the territories of his Highness the Maharaja for the protection of the British territories, or those of their allies, the British troops shall, on such special occasions, due notice being given, be allowed to pass through the Lahore territories In such case, the officers of the Lahore State will afford facilities in providing supplies and boats for the passage of rivers, and the British Government will pay the full price of all such provisions and boats, and will make fair compensation for all private property that may be damaged The British Government will moreover observe all due consideration to the religious feelings of the inhabitants of those tracts through which the army may pass

Article 11 The Maharaja engages never to take, or retain, in his service, any British subject, or the subject of any European or American State, without the consent of the British Government

Article 12 In consideration of the services rendered by Raja Golab Singh of Jammu to the Lahore State, towards procuring the restoration of the relations of amity between the Lahore and British Governments, the Maharaja hereby agrees to recognize the independent sovereignty of Raja Golab Singh, in such territories and districts in the hills as may be made over to the said Raja Golab Singh by separate agreement between himself and the British Government, with the dependencies thereof, which may have been in the Raja's possession since the time of the late Maharaja Kharak Singh and the British Government, in consideration of the good conduct of Raja Golab Singh, also agrees to recognise his independence in such territories, and admit him to the privileges of a separate treaty with the British Government

Article 13 In the event of any dispute or difference arising between the Lahore State and Raja Gulab Singh, the same shall be referred to the arbitration of the British Government, and by its decision the Maharaja engages to abide

Article 14 The limits of the Lahore territories shall not be, at any time, changed, without the concurrence of the British Government

Article 15 The British Government will not exercise any interference in the internal administration of the Lahore State, but in all cases or questions which may be referred to the British Government, the Governor General will give the aid of his advice and good offices for the furtherance of the interests of the Lahore Government

Article 16 The subjects of either State shall, on visiting the territories of the other, be on the footing of the subjects of the most favoured nation

This treaty, consisting of sixteen articles, has been this day settled by Frederick Currie, Esq, and Brevet Major Henry Montgomery Lawrence, acting under the directions of the Right Honourable Sir

Henry Hardinge, G. C. B, Governor-General, on the part of the British Government, and by Bhai Ram Singh, Raja Lal Singh, Sardar Tej Singh, Sardar Chattar Singh Attariwala, Sardar Ranjor Singh Majithia, Dewan Dina Nath, and Fakir Nuruddin, on the part of the Maharaja Dalip Singh; and the said treaty has been this day ratified by the seal of the Right Honourable Sir Henry Hardinge, G. C. B., Governor-General and by that of his Highness Maharaja Dalip Singh

Done at Lahore, this 9th day of March, in the year of our Lord 1846, corresponding with the 10th day of Rabi-ul-awal, 1262, Hijri, and ratified on the same day.

APPENDIX No. 13

SUPPLEMENTARY ARTICLES TO FIRST TREATY WITH LAHORE OF 1846

Articles of Agreement concluded between the British Government and the Lahore Durbar, on 11th of March 1486.

Whereas the Lahore Government has solicited the Governor-General to have a British force at Lahore, for the protection of the Maharaja's person and of the capital, till the reorganization of the Lahore army, according to the provisions of article 6 of treaty of Lahore, dated the 9th instant And whereas the Governor-General has, on certain conditions, consented to the measure And whereas it is expedient that certain matters concerning the territories ceded by articles 3 and 4 of the aforesaid treaty should be specifically determined; the following eight articles of agreement have this day been concluded between the afore-mentioned contracting parties.

Article 1. The British Government shall leave at Lahore, till the close of the current year, A D 1846, such force as shall seem to the Governor-General adequate for the purpose of protecting the person of the Maharaja, and inhabitants of the city of Lahore, during the reorganization of the Sikh army, in accordance with the provisions of article 6 of the treaty of Labore, that force to be withdrawn at any convenient time before the expiration of the year, if the object to be fulfilled shall in the opinion of the Durbar, have been obtained, but the force shall not be detained at Lahore beyond the expiration of the current year.

Article 2. The Lahore Government agrees that the force left at Lahore, for the purpose specified in the foregoing article, shall be placed in full possession of the fort and the city of Lahore, and that the Lahore troops shall be removed from within the city. The Lahore Government engages to furnish convenient quarters for the officers and men of the said force, and to pay to the British Government all the extra expenses, in regard to the said force, which may be incurred by the British Government, in consequence of their troops being employed away from their own cantonments, and in a foreign territory.

Article 3 The Lahore Government engages to apply itself immediately and earnestley to the reorganization of its army, according to the prescribed conditions, and to communicate fully with the British

authorities left at Lahore, as to the progress of such reorganization, and as to the location of the troops.

Article 4 If the Lahore Government fails in the performance of the conditions of the foregoing article, the British Government shall be at liberty to withdraw the force from Lahore, at any time before the expiration of the period specified in article I

Article 5 The British Government agrees to respect the bonafide rights of those Jagirdars within the territories ceded by articles 3 and 4 of the treay of Lahore, dated 9th instant, who were attached to families of the Late Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Kharak Singh, and Sher Singh, and the British Government will maintain those Jagirdars in their bonafide possessions, during their lives

Article 6 The Lahore Government shall receive the assistance of the British local authorities in recovering the arrears of revenue justly due to the Lahore Government from their Kardars and managers in the territories ceded by the provisions of articles 3 and 4 of the treaty of Lahore, to the close of the Kharif harvest of the current year, *viz* 1902 of the Sambat Bikramajit

Article 7 The Lahore Government shall be at liberty to remove from the forts in the territories specified in the foregoing article, all treasure and State property, with the exception of guns Should, however, the British Government desire to retain any part of the same at a fair valuation, and the British officers shall give their assistance to the Lahore Government, in disposing on the spot of such part of the aforesaid property as the Lahore Government may not wish to remove, and the British officers may not desire to retain

Article 8. Commissioners shall be immediately appointed by the two Governments, to settle and lay down the boundary between the two States, as defined by article 4 of the treaty of Lahore, dated 9th March 1846

APPENDIX No 14

TREATY WITH GULAB SINGH OF 1846

Treaty between the British Government and Maharaja Gulab Singh, concluded at Amritsar, on 16th March 1846

Treaty between the British Government on the one part, and Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu on the other, concluded, on the part of the British Government, by Frederick Currie, Esq, and Brevet-Major Henry Montgomery Lawrence, acting under the orders of the Right Honourable Sir Henry Hardinge, G C B, one of Her Britannic Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, Governor General, appointed by the Honourable Company to direct and control all their affairs in the East Indies, and by Maharaja Gulab Singh in person

Article 1 The British Government transfers and makes over, for ever, in independent possession, to Maharaja Gulab Singh, and the male heirs of his body, all the hilly or mountainous country, with its dependencies situated to the eastward of the river Indus, and westward of the river Ravi, including Chamba and excluding Lahul, being part of the territory ceded to the British Government by the Lahore State, according to the provisions of article 4 of the treaty of Labore, dated 9th March 1846.

Article 2. The eastern boundary of the tract transferred by the foregoing article to Maharaja Gulab Singh shall be laid down by commissioners appointed by the British Government and Maharaja Gulab Singh respectively, for that purpose, and shall be defined in a separate engagement, after survey.

Article 3 In consideration of the transfer made to him and his heirs by the provisions of the foregoing articles, Maharaja Gulab Singh will pay to the British Government the sum of seventy-five lacs of rupees (Nanakshahi), fifty lacs to be paid on ratification of this treaty, and twenty-five lacs on or before the 1st of October of the current year, A D 1846

Article 4. The limits of the territories of Maharaja Gulab Singh shall not be at any time changed without the concurrence of the British Government

Article 5 Maharaja Gulab Singh will refer to the arbitration of British Government any disputes or questions that may arise between himself and the Government of Lahore, or any other neighbouring State, and will abide by the decision of the British Government.

Article 6 Maharaja Gulab Singh engages for himself and heirs, to join, with the whole of his military force, the British troops, when employed within the hills, or in the territories adjoining his possesions

Article 7 Maharaja Gulab Singh engages never to take, or retain, in his service any British subject, nor the subject of any European or American State, without the consent of the British Government

Article 8 Maharaja Gulab Singh engages to respect, in regard to the territory transferred to him, the provisions of articles 5, 6, and 7, of the separate engagement between the British Governmeat and the Lahore Durbar, dated March 11th 1846

Article 9. The British Government will give its aid to Maharaja Gulab Singh, in protecting his territories from external enemies.

Article 10 Maharaja Gulab Singh acknowledges the supremacy of the British Goverament, and will, in token of such supremacy, present annually to the British Government one horse, twelve perfect shawl goats of appoved breed (six male, and six female), and three pairs of Kashmir shawls

This treaty, consisting of ten articles has been this day settled by Frederick Currie, Esq, and Brevet Major Henry Montgomery Lawrence, acting under the directions of the Right Honourable Sir Henry Hardinge, G C. B, Governor-General, on the part of the British Government, and by Maharaja Gulah Singh in person, and the said treaty has been this day ratified by the seal of the Right Honourable Sir Henry Hardinge, G C. B, Governor-General

Done at Amritsar, this 16th Day of March, in the year of our Lord 1846, corresponding with the 17th day of Rabi-ul-awal, 1262, Hijri

APPENDIX No 15
SECOND TREATY WITH LAHORE OF 1846

Foreign Department, Camp Bhyrowal Ghat, on the left bank of the Beas, the 22nd December, 1846

The late Governor of Kashmir, on the part of the Labore State,

Sheikh Imam ud-din, having resisted by force of arms the occupation of the province of Kashmir by Maharaja Gulab Singh, the Lahore Government was called upon to coerce their subject, and to make over the province to the representative of the British Government, in *fulfilment of* the conditions of the treaty of Lahore, dated 9th March, 1846

A British force was employed to support and aid, if necessary, the combined forces of the Lahore State and Maharaja Gulab Singh in the above operations

Sheikh Imam-ud-din intimated to the British Government that he was acting under orders received from the Lahore Durbar in the course he was pursuing, and stated that the insurrection had been instigated by *written instructions received* by *him from* the Vazier Raja Lal Singh.

Sheikh Imam ud din surrendered to the British Agent on a guarantee from that officer, that if the Sheikh could, as he asserted, prove that his acts were in accordance with his instructions, and that the opposition was instigated by the Lahore Minister, the Durbar should not be permitted to inflict upon him, either in his person or his property, any penalty on account of his conduct on this occasion The British agent pledged his Government to a full and impartial investigation of the matter

A public inquiry was instituted into the facts adduced by Sheikh Imam-ud-din, and it was fully established that Raja Lal Singh did secretly instigate the Sheikh to oppose the occupation by Maharaja Gulab Singh of the province of Kashmir

The Governor-General immediately demanded that the Ministers and Chiefs of the Lahore State should depose and exile to the British provinces the Vazier Raja Lal Singh

His Lordship consented to accept the deposition of Raja Lal Singh as an atonement for the attempt to infringe the treaty by the secret intrigues and machinations of the Vazier. It was not proved that the other members of the Durbar had cognizance of the Vazier's proceedings, and the conduct of the Sardars, and of the Sikh army in the late operations for quelling the Kashmir insurrection, and removing the obstacles to the fulfilment of the treaty, proved that the criminality of the Vazier was not participated in by the Sikh nation

The Ministers and Chiefs unanimously decreed, and carried into immediate effect, the deposition of the Vazier.

After a few days' deliberations, relative to the means of forming a Government at Lahore, the remaining members of the Durbar, in concert with all the Sardars and Chiefs of the State, solicited the interference and aid of the British Government for the maintenance of an administration, and the protection of the Maharaja Dalip Singh during the minority of his Highness

The solicitation by the Durbar and Chiefs has led to the temporary modification of the relations between the British Government and that of Lahore, established by the treaty of the 9th March of the present year

The terms and conditions of this modification are set forth in the following articles of Agreement.

Articles of Agreement concluded between the British Government and the Lahore Darbar on 16th December, 1846

Whereas the Lahore Durbar and the principal Chiefs and Sardars of the State have, in express terms, communicated to the British Government their anxious desire that the Governor-General should give his aid and his assistance to maintain the administration of the Lahore State during the minority of Maharaja Dalip Singh, and have declared this measure to be indispensable for the maintenance of the Government And whereas the Governor-General has, under certain conditions, consented to give the aid and assistance solicited, the following articles of agreement, in modification of the articles of agreement, executed at Lahore on the 11th March last, have been concluded, on the part of the British Government, by Frederick Currie, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India, and Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Montgomery Lawrence, C.B., Agent to the Governor-General, North-West Frontier, by virtue of full powers to that effect vested in them by the Right Honourable Viscount Hardinge, G C B, Governor-General, and on the part of his Highness Maharaja Dalip Singh, by Sardar Tej Singh, Sardar Sher Singh, Dewan Dina Nath, Fakir Nur-ud-din, Rai Kishan Chand, Sardar Ranjor Singh Majithia, Sardar Attar Singh Kaliwala, Bhai Nidhan Singh, Sardar Khan Singh Majithia, Sardar Shamsher Singh, Sardar Lal Singh Moraria, Sardar Kehar Singh Sindhianwala, Sardar Arjun Singh Rangrangha, acting with the unanimous consent and concurrence of the Chiefs and Sardars of the State assembled at Lahore

Article 1 All and every part of the treaty of peace between the British Government and the State of Lahore, bearing date the 9th day of March, 1846, except in so far as it may be temporarily modified in respect to clause 15 of the said treaty by this engagement, shall remain binding upon the two Governments.

Article 2. A British officer, with an efficient establishment of assistants, shall be appointed by the Governor-General to remain at Lahore, which officer shall have full authority to direct and control all matters in every department of the State

Article 3 Every attention shall be paid, in conducting the administration according to the feelings of the people, to preserving the national institutions and customs, and to maintain the just rights of all classes

Article 4. Changes in the mode and details of administration shall not be made, except when found necessary for effecting the objects set forth in the foregoing clause, and for securing the just dues of the Lahore Government. These details shall be conducted by native officers, as at present, who shall be appointed and superintended by a Council of Regency, composed of leading Chiefs and Sardars, acting under the control and guidance of the British Resident

Article 5 The following persons shall in the first instance constitute the Council of Regency, *viz*, Sardar Tej Singh, Sardar Sher Singh Attariwala, Dewan Dina Nath, Fakir Nur-ud-din, Sardar Ranjor Singh Majithia, Bhai Nidhan Singh, Sardar Attar Singh Kaliwala, Sardar Shamsher Singh Sindhianwala; and no change shall be made in the persons thus nominated, without the consent of the British Resident, acting under the orders of the Governor-General

Article 6 The administration of the country shall be conducted by this Council of Regency in such manner as may be determined on by themselves in consultation with the British Resident, who shall have authority to direct and control the duties of every department.

Article 7. A British force, of such strength and numbers, and in such positions, as the Governor General may think fit, shall remain at Lahore for the protection of the Maharaja, and the preservation of the peace of the country.

Article 8 The Governor-General shall be at liberty to occupy with British soldiers any fort or military post in the Lahore territories, the occupation of which may be deemed necessary by the Government for the security of the capital, or for maintaining the peace of the country

Article 9 The Lahore State shall pay to the British Government twenty two lacs of new Nanakshahi rupees of full tale and weight per annum, for the maintenance of this force, and to meet the expenses incurred by the British Government, such sum to be paid by two instalments, or 13 lacs and 20 000 in May or June, and 8 lacs and 80 000 in November or December of each year

Article 10 Inasmuch as it is fitting that her Highness the Maharani, the mother of Maharaja Dalip Singh, should have a proper provision made for the maintenance of herself and dependents, the sum of 1 lac and 50,000 rupees shall be set apart annually for that purpose, and shall be at her Highness's disposal

Article 11 The provisions of this engagement shall have effect during the minority of his Highness Maharaja Dalip Singh, and shall cease and terminate on his Highness attaining the full age of 16 years, or on the 4th September of the year 1854, but is shall be competent to the Governor-General to cause the arrangement to cease, at any period prior to the coming of age of his Highness, at which the Governor General and the Lahore Durbar may be satisfied that the interposition of the British Government is no longer necessary for maintaining the Government of his Highness the Maharaja

This agreement, consisting of eleven articles, was settled and executed at Lahore, by the officers and Chiefs and Sardars above named, on the 16th day of December, 1846

APPENDIX No 16

TERMS GRANTED TO, AND ACCEPTED BY, MAHARAJA DALIP SINGH (1849)

Terms granted to the Maharaja Dalip Singh Bahadur, on the part of the Honourable East India Company, by Henry Meirs Elliot, Esqr, Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, and Lieutenant Colonel Sir Henry Montgomery Lawrence, K. C B, Resident, in virtue of full powers vested in them by the Right Honourable James, Earl of Dalhousie, Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle, one of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, Governor-General appointed by the Honourable East India Company to direct and control all their affairs in the East Indies, and accepted on the part of his

Highness the Maharaja, by Raja Tej Singh, Raja Dina Nath, Bhai Nidhan Singh, Fakir Nur-ud-din, Gurdur Singh, Agent of Sardar Sher Singh Sindhanwala and Sardar Lal Singh, Agent and son of Sardar Attar Singh Kalianwala, Members of the Council of Regency, invested with full power and authority on the part of his Highness

1st His Highness the Maharaja Dalip Singh shall resign for himself, his heirs, and his successors, all right title, and claim to the sovereignty of the Punjab, or to any sovereign power whatever.

2nd All the property of the State, of whatever description and wheresoever found, shall be confiscated to the Honourable East India Company, in part payment of the debt due by the State of Lahore to the British Government, and of the expenses of the war

3rd. The gem called the Koh-i-Nur, which was taken from Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, shall be surrendered by the Maharaja of Lahore to the Queen of England.

4th His Highness Dalip Singh shall receive from the Honourable East India Company, for the support of himself, his relatives, and the servants of the State, a pension not less than four and not exceeding five lakhs of Company's rupees per annum

5th His Highness shall be treated with respect and honour. He shall retain the title of Maharaja Dalip Singh Bahadur, and he shall continue to receive, during his life, such portion of the above-named pension as may be allotted to himself personally, provided he shall reside at such place as the Governor-General of India may select

Granted and accepted at Lahore, on the 29th of March, 1849, and ratified by the Right Honourable the Governor-General on the 5th April, 1849.

the *North-West Frontier Agency*, 1 January, 1844-27 June, 1844 ; No 30/12 (106)—*Letters to the Governor General's Agency at the North-West Frontier* (same dates).

(ii) No. PRO 30/12 Part II (i) *Correspondence and Papers relative to the Punjab*, 1839-1841. Contains, in general, official papers, notes, and observations on policy matters relative to the Punjab.

(iii) No. PRO 30/12 (21/7). *Lord Ellenborough's Private Correspondence with Sir Henry and Lady Hardinge, 1842-1847.* Contains detailed information on Lord Hardinge's policy towards the Punjab, before and after the first Sikh War. Details of military movements towards the N.W. Frontier, British military preparations for a war with the Sikhs and Hardinge's shady deal with Gulab Singh, is fully discussed in these papers.

(iv) No. PRO 30/12 (72). *Miscellaneous and Military Affairs*, 1839-1843 This file provides information about Ellenborough's military policy.

(v) No. PRO 30/12 (25/1) *Correspondence relative to Punjab Affairs*, 1839-43 This file contains details of the Sikh part in the military operations on the Khyber. Lists of Army Movements for the year 1843-44, troop movements to Meerut, Ambala, Ferozepur and Ludhiana etc. give a picture of Ellenborough's military preparations for a war with the Sikhs.

(vi) No 30/12 (13). *Private Correspondence of the Duke of Wellington with Ellenborough*

(vii) No. 30/12 (23/12). *Private Correspondence of Lord Ellenborough with the Duke of Wellington.*

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(ix) No. 30/12 (8) *Correspondence, Papers, Drafts etc. of Lord Ellenborough relating to Indian Affairs*, 1841-42. No (11)-the same, from 1838-1843

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(b) *Wellesley Despatches*—1798 to the Court of Directors—21 November Craig to Wellesley—13 October Dundas to Grenville—13 June Craig s Memoir on the possible invasion of Zamaun Shah (i) Append E.

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